

20 NEW NATIONAL PARK TRIPS
(18 PAGES OF FRESH IDEAS)

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Outside

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ISSUE**

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PANAMA ODYSSEY PART I:

IN THE SHADOW OF THE SHARK

(OR HOW I LEARNED THE LESSON OF HUMILITY SWIMMING ALONGSIDE A 15-TON BEHEMOTH OF THE DEEP)

BY THAYER WALKER

"You see that shadow off the bow?" my dive guide Kevin asked as we dropped anchor. "We've got something big."

It was less than an hour into my three-day dive trip to Coiba National Park, 12 miles south of Panama's Pacific coast in the Gulf of Chiriqui, and I had already hit the jackpot. I struggled awkwardly into my scuba gear and wetsuit as fast as I could. By the time I finally rolled off the gunwale and into the 80-degree water, however, the shadow vanished and with it, seemingly, my luck.

Full disclosure, I'm an adrenaline junkie. I wanted to explore Panama's Pacific Coast because big fish are so reliable in these parts that my outfitter, Coiba Dive Center, guaranteed that I'd see sharks.

Diving with sharks brings out a surprising combination of emotions in me. There's fear, of course, when you're swimming, unprotected, alongside such a powerful animal. But there's also reverence for something so enormous and so perfectly evolved it's changed little over hundreds of million years. Most surprising though was the humility I feel down here, beneath the waves and immersed in a liquid jungle, where I no longer stand atop the food chain. Far from it.

Kevin gave me some good advice that works for tightrope walkers too, by the way: Don't

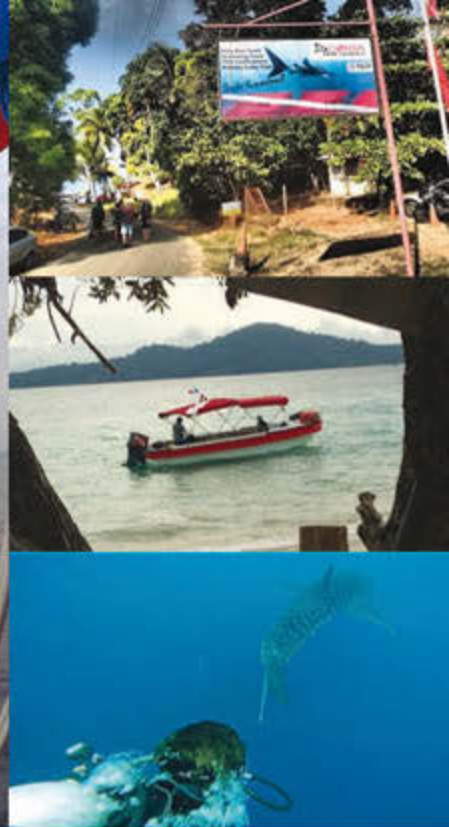
look down. The main attraction isn't the reef, it's the ocean. I learned this lesson the hard way, soon after the giant shadow disappeared. With plankton murky limiting visibility to 15 feet, I began noodling over the reef when a baby giant manta ray drew my eye toward the deep. The shadow returned. And with it an anxiety that sent my adrenaline pumping.

A whale shark, mouth agape and wide as the grill of a Cadillac, swam toward me. The twenty-five foot filter-feeder arched through the water column swallowing huge gulps of plankton. A second whale shark, a little guy at 18 feet, joined the dinner party, and with his appearance came another emotion: joy. The whale sharks, certainly, were happy feasting on a warm stew of krill, but I was overwhelmed with

glee. Swimming along fifteen streamlined tons of fish, I had a front row seat to world's the best buffet line. For twenty minutes, the sharks glided around me in graceful loops.

Not even water pressure 80 feet down could restrain my exuberance; when they finally disappeared into the murk, I let out a gurgly howl. My dive watch howled back. Bouncing through the water column chasing whale sharks turned my dive profile into a saw-toothed mess. It was time to surface before I gave myself the bends—an amateur mistake, with a potentially deadly outcome.

Back on the boat, I asked Kevin, the dive guide, if these were the biggest animals around Coiba. "Not even close," he replied with a grin. "Humpback whale season starts in June." ▲



Meet Thayer Walker. A regular *Outside* contributor, Thayer has written about walking jaguars in Bolivia and paragliding in the Indian Himalayas. He takes as his mantra "Live Bravely."

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Published by Mariah Media Network LLC • Outside was founded as Mariah in 1976

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MEMBER OF THE AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS AND THE MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

ADVERTISING

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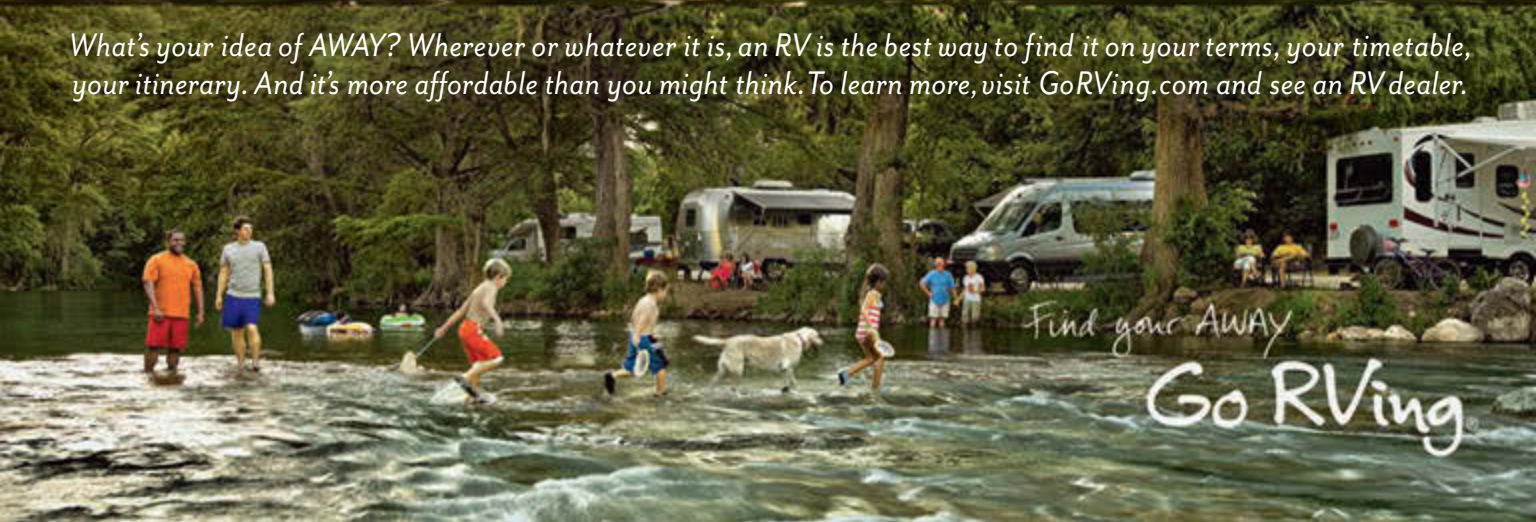
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BY MICHAEL BEHAR

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They get paid to climb mountains and raft whitewater. But guiding isn't all a dream—not with whiny clients, lousy tips, and the occasional colleague pranking you in a gorilla suit.

BY CHRISTOPHER SOLOMON

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First she escaped a notorious cult. Then her boyfriend was killed by a crocodile in the Congo. So Juliana Buhning left it all behind by cycling around the world—and she's still rolling.

BY GRAYSON SCHAFFER

94 CRUX TIME

The avalanche that killed 16 Sherpas on Mount Everest last spring hasn't stopped crowds of climbers from flocking to Base Camp. ANNA CALLAGHAN and MOLLY LOOMIS map out the dangers of another controversial season.

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Forty years after his father taught him to surf the empty, picture-perfect waves of Mexico's sprawling Pacific coast, NORMAN OLLESTAD returns with his own son—and finds that tough love is just as difficult to give as it is to receive.

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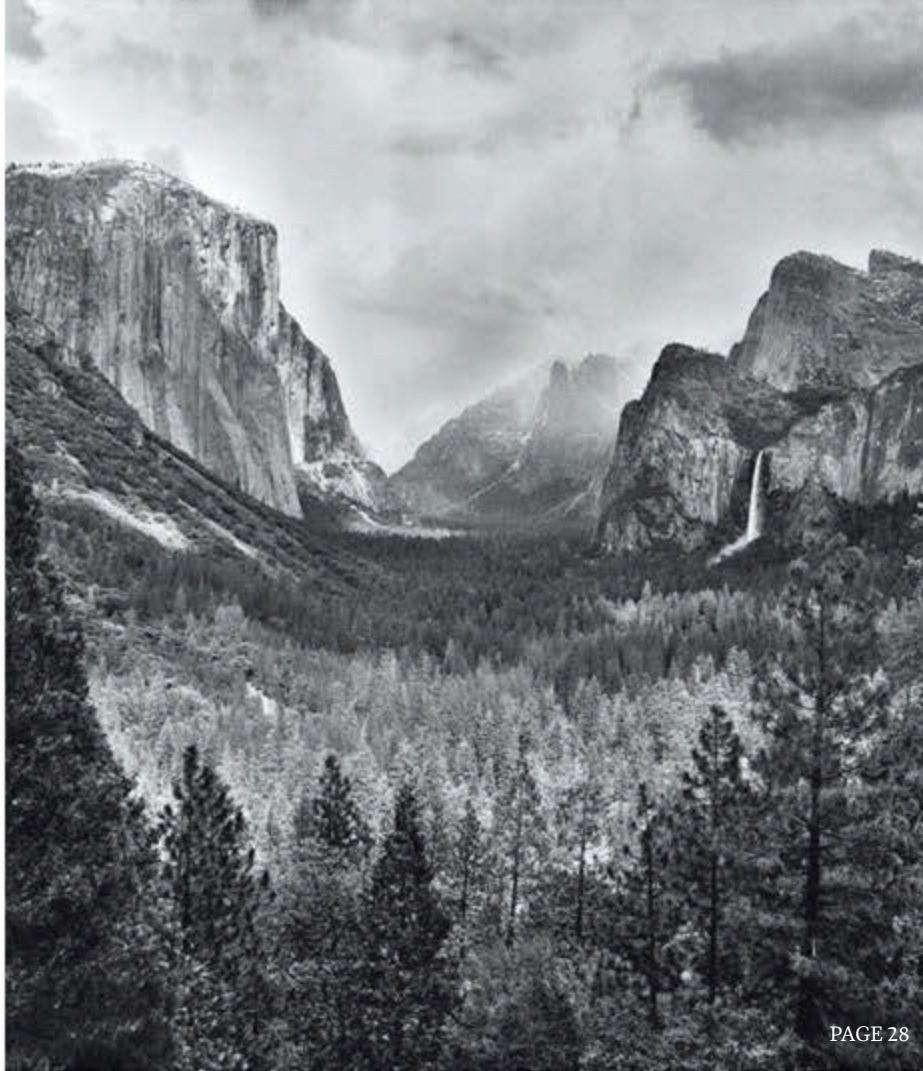


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BY BRODY LEVEN

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National Parks: The Park Service turns 100 next year. Get a jump on the crowds and explore our favorite hidden corners, empty spaces, and wild places in ten iconic parks. Plus: Exposure shots from Yosemite, Zion, and more.

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A Dream Itinerary

Two decades ago I received an unforgettable gift courtesy of the infamous budget stalemate between Newt Gingrich and President Bill Clinton. It was early January 1996, and a government shutdown was entering its fourth week. I was a college student on winter break, road-tripping through the desert Southwest with a friend from high school. This was way before smartphones, and having just completed a three-day hike in Utah's Grand Gulch, we were blissfully unaware of what was going on in the world at large. When we arrived at the Grand Canyon on the evening of January 6, the gates were closed. Huh, that's odd, we thought. So we pitched a tent just outside the park boundaries.

The next morning, we decided to check the entrance again. Good thing. The budget impasse had ended the previous day, and thanks to its duration, thousands of tourists had canceled their visits. Normally, one must reserve a campsite months in advance, but the park was virtually empty. We simply waltzed into a ranger office and secured a backcountry permit on the spot. "Your choice," said the ranger, spreading out a map. "You boys can pretty much go wherever you want." He outlined his dream itinerary, and an hour later we set forth for the Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the canyon. I believe we saw two other groups on the way down.

These days iconic sites like Yosemite Valley and Zion's Angels Landing draw hordes, leaving the impression that our national parks have become overrun and jammed with traffic. That's not true—and you don't have to wait for the next federal shutdown to experience crowd-free bliss. As our heavily researched collection of national park trips demonstrates ("99 and Counting," page 28), you can have entire swaths of these places to yourself if you're willing to look past the most famous landmarks.

—CHRISTOPHER KEYES (@KEYESER)

"AS IF ON CUE, EACH WAVE FOLDED FROM THE TOP OF THE POINT DOWN INTO THE HEART OF THE COVE, NEVER OVERRUNNING THE OPEN FACE—A SURFER'S CANVAS."
—NORMAN OLLESTAD, PAGE 96



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Overcoming fear is essential to being able to live a full life. Nobody knows that better than **Norman Ollestad**, who lost his father in 1979, at age 11, in a four-person plane crash in California's San Gabriel Mountains. Ollestad, who was also on board, made his way down an 8,200-foot peak in a blizzard to find shelter; he was the only one to survive. He revisited the site three decades later in his best-selling memoir, *Crazy for the Storm*. For this month's "Vertical Snap" (page 96), Ollestad

set out to teach his own son how to quash his anxieties during a surf trip near Mexico's Gulf of California. "I probably would have died in that crash were I not as attuned to nature," Ollestad says. "There was almost no way for me to not feel compelled to show my son how to survive and ultimately find harmony and joy in nature."



FROM EVEREST TO YOUR SMARTPHONE

There are plenty of changes afoot on Mount Everest this year—from commercial outfitters opting for a north-side ascent to high-profile Sherpas refusing to climb. We preview five of the most contentious issues in this month's "Crux Time" (page 94), but we won't stop there. Go to outsideonline.com/everest2015 for ongoing coverage of the biggest news from the world's highest peak.

Between the Lines

FROM THE CUTTING-ROOM FLOOR

To get the inside scoop for "The Secret Life of Guides" (page 74), we canvassed 500 professionals for their best stories, most nightmarish clients, biggest mishaps, and most groan-inducing jokes. We couldn't fit it all into seven pages, so here are some of our favorite outtakes.

→

What is your substance of choice for getting through the long days?

Red Bull and ibuprofen



Metallica



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What's the biggest tip you've received?
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Corvette



Tequila gift basket



A man is shown from the back, wearing a bright blue short-sleeved t-shirt. The back of the shirt is covered in a grid of small, dark, oval-shaped vents. The man's skin is dark, and his hair is short. The background is a dark, solid color.

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Between the Lines

TIM ZIMMERMANN RESPONDS: *The point I was trying to make is not that zoo education is wholly ineffective but that it is not effective enough to justify the compromised lives we force zoo animals to lead.*

ROAD RULES

Andrew Tilin's article about cycling advocate Megan Hottman was an excellent validation for my wanting to play the part of cycling ambassador. My one gripe is the persistent use of the word *accident*. *Accident* implies either lack of avoidability or lack of fault, but let's face it: most traffic mishaps are the fault of one of the involved parties.

MICHAEL LEMBERGER
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Bicycles are vehicles. They ought to be respected as such, and the riders held to the same vehicular laws as any other lawful user of the roadway. If you cannot control your vehicle and afford other lawful users of the roadway the basic respect they deserve, then it is you who shouldn't be on the road. It is you who are the problem.

LYLE BOGART
TACOMA, WASHINGTON

I ride every day and have learned to put self-preservation ahead of competitiveness when the adversary outweighs me by a ton. Riding for a best time leads to recklessness if you don't include reasonable stops.

BRUCE JACKSON
NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK

FEEDBACK

MONKEY BARS

In March's "Don't Fence Me In," Tim Zimmermann declared zoos no longer necessary. While some readers agreed, others defended animal parks as a useful tool to inspire young people to appreciate the natural world.

For Zimmermann to suggest that we should watch nature videos instead of seeing a living animal strikes me as contradictory to the philosophy of *Outside*. Everything in the March issue—from the pictures of the kayaker on the waterfall to the article about ultimate vacation destinations—speaks to how important it is to experience our world and the things that are in it.

AMY ARNETT
PARKER, COLORADO

Some species, like elephants, will never thrive in a captive environment. There are studies that suggest that movies and television do more to encourage conservation than seeing a western lowland gorilla in a small enclosure. Zoos do very little successful animal reintroduction because it's the habitat that needs saving first.

LEX BRANSHAW
BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO

While factually accurate in its description of my research, Zimmermann's article puts a misleading spin on the facts by suggesting that the level of positive impacts I found

shows that zoo-based education is ineffective. In fact, the level of positive impact I found was quite impressive for a one-day informal intervention like this. While my research does not address the broader question of whether zoos are worthwhile institutions, the evidence of their potential as sites for biodiversity education and engagement is clear.

ERIC JENSEN
COVENTRY, ENGLAND

HARD CHARGING

Outside's **Grayson**

Schaffer had a stressful time last November while reporting two stories for this issue. He rode 325 miles in Italy with endurance cyclist Juliana Buhring ("The Road Goes on Forever," page 86), then flew to Mexico and battled altitude sickness on 18,850-foot Pico de Orizaba ("The Ill-Advised, Wildly Ambitious Weekend Plan," page 18). On the plus side, he did have the corporate AmEx.

↑ **NOVEMBER 13:**
Eats house-made risotto at Il San Pietro di Pasitano hotel while the manager hits on Buhring.

↓ **NOVEMBER 12:**
Tries to keep up with Buhring on a 125-mile ride.

NOVEMBER 14:
Flies 18 grueling economy-class hours from Copenhagen to Houston.

NOVEMBER 22:
Suffers from altitude sickness; vomits on ski boots while descending Pico de Orizaba.

NOVEMBER 23:
Drinks margaritas in Mexico with skiers Brody Leven and Caroline Gleich.

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MEET THE ZEROS

Many here at *Outside* are natural athletes—online associate managing editor Axie Navas did time as a competitive ski racer, and editor Christopher Keyes recently completed the Power of Four ski-mountaineering race (which entails 11,600 feet of vertical gain over 25 miles)—but a few are total hacks. We recently tried to rectify this by getting our in-house experts to teach the noobs among us how to climb, run, and ski for the online Zero to Hero series. (See the videos and get coaching tips at outsideonline.com/zerotohero.) How are the pupils coming along? The masters give us a progress report.

TEST SUBJECT:

Associate online editor **Matt Bell**

TEACHER:

Associate editor **Matt Skenazy**

DISCIPLINE:

Climbing

GRADE: B.

"On day one, it took him 45 minutes to climb a single route on top rope. But on the final shoot he cruised it. I think he was sandbagging."

TEST SUBJECT:

Online editor **Scott Rosenfield**

TEACHER:

Marketing director **Sam Moulton**

DISCIPLINE:

Skiing

GRADE: A minus.

"It took Scott a while to move past pizza, but now he totally shreds."



Bell



Rosenfield



Thomas

TEST SUBJECT:

Associate online editor **Greg Thomas**

TEACHER:

Associate editor **Meaghen Brown**

DISCIPLINE:

Running

GRADE: C.

"Rather than focus on his training, Greg would do things like text me on a Saturday morning asking if he should be eating chia seeds. But he gets some points for enthusiasm."



GO WITH US

This month we devoted 18 pages to the best ways to visit our national parks ("99 and Counting," page 28). If that's not enough for you, join our very own travel outfitter Outside GO on a 12-day Untamed Alaska trip. You start with three nights camping at the foot of Denali, then hop on a 24-person catamaran to tour the coast on your way to Kenai Fjords National Park, then grab a floatplane that takes you to Turquoise Lake in Lake Clark National Park. From \$8,550; outsidego.com

WE FOUND THIS IN OUR GEAR CAGE

Portland General Store's Black Fly Beard Oil "not only softens ruff scruff and soothes skin, but is also effective as a natural repellent." \$30; portlandgeneralstore.com



WHAT WE'RE WATCHING THIS MONTH

In April, Outside Television launches season two of *Locals*. Each episode follows one of the world's finest athletes—from backcountry snowboarder Jeremy Jones to surfer Ian Walsh—as they introduce

the best lines, breaks, and trails in their own backyards. This season, watch Gavin McClurg—one of the paragliders profiled in "Cloud Hoppers" (page 64)—as he shows us around Sun Valley, Idaho. Tune in Thursdays at 9:30 P.M. Eastern and Pacific. outside.com



THE WOODSHED

In "Return to Center" (March), professional surfer Layne Beachley was incorrectly referred to as Hawaiian. She's Australian. *Outside* regrets the error.

FACEBOOK COMMENT OF THE MONTH:

Neil Johns Why don't you just marry Laird Hamilton, Outside Magazine?

Like · Reply · 1
February 23 at 11:46pm

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DESIGNED FOR FREEDOM

Brody Leven
and Caroline
Gleich at
17,000 feet

THE ILL-ADVISED, WILDLY AMBITIOUS WEEKEND PLAN

JUST BECAUSE IT'S *theoretically possible* TO CLIMB
AND SKI OFF NORTH AMERICA'S TALLEST VOLCANO IN 24 HOURS
OR LESS, INCLUDING TRAVEL TIME FROM THE AIRPORT,
doesn't mean you should. BY BRODY LEVEN

HIGH-ALTITUDE MOUNTAINEERING is typically the domain of the far-off and the frostbitten. Climbing a big mountain usually takes at least three weeks. But most people don't realize that North America's third-highest mountain, Pico de Orizaba, is in south-central Mexico, just two hours by air from Houston or four from Atlanta. It usually takes three days to climb.

Ascending the glaciated, roughly 18,500-foot stratovolcano is pretty straightforward and a good opportunity to strap on crampons for the first time and see how you perform at altitude. Last November, I wanted a bigger challenge—to do the whole thing in a day. I invited Patagonia-sponsored athlete and ski mountaineer Caroline Gleich, a 29-year-old, five-foot-one blonde with a fierce wit who's a regular ski partner at home in Salt Lake City. She's been the face on Ski Utah's brochures for the past couple of years and lately has taken to ski mountaineering in Ecuador and Slovenia. And I called *Outside* senior editor Grayson Schaffer, who doesn't need much urging to get out of the office. "I'm in. But I won't be fast," he warned.

The idea was to climb up and ski down the mountain quickly enough to fit the expedition into a long weekend, including air travel. Our hurried itinerary—skipping the acclimatization—made us wildly more susceptible to altitude sickness and elicited admonishment from our more reasonable mountaineering friends. But hey, we wanted to ski it before the Monday-morning office coffee was brewing.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19
4 A.M.

ALTITUDE: 15 FEET

Caroline and I spend the night lobbying for climate-change action on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., for Protect Our Winters, a snowsports-industry nonprofit, right up until we grab an Uber to Reagan National Airport for a 5:30 A.M. flight to Puebla, Mexico. I haven't slept.

2:35 P.M.
7,085 FEET

A driver from Servimont, an 83-year-old guiding service housed in an old soap factory in the town of Tlachichuca, near Pico de Orizaba, holds a sign in the Puebla



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airport that reads WELCOME MY NEW FRIENDS in Spanish. We pick up Grayson at the Holiday Inn and head to Servimont HQ.

5:17 P.M.

8,614 FEET

Gerardo Reyes, a third-generation Pico de Orizaba climber and second-generation owner of Servimont, meets us at the tiny entrance to the compound. We've hired him to provide a driver to take us to Refugio Grande, a cinderblock climbers' shelter on the slopes of Orizaba, and to watch our stuff while we're on the mountain. We eat a quick dinner of beans and tortillas, during which Reyes calmly discloses his doubts about us climbing and skiing the peak in one night. He thinks it best if we pay for the driver up front, because "*Quién sabe lo que va a pasar.*" Which means, essentially: he isn't sure we'll make it back alive.

7:09 P.M.

13,976 FEET

We pile our gear into the back of Reyes's new Dodge Ram pickup and bounce up the 15-mile 4x4 track toward the *refugio*, which is at 13,976 feet, sleeps 40 people, and is maintained by Mexico's park service, the environmental organization Grupo de los Cien, and local taxi drivers. We had planned to ski a very steep couloir off the east side of the mountain, but now Caroline and Grayson are leaning toward the more traveled trade route. "It's our first time on skis this year, above 18,000 feet, without any acclimatization, on an unknown route," says Grayson. Caroline adds, "I think there are a few strikes against us. I'd rather have a good shot at the summit." We'd discussed all this weeks ago, but the sudden reality of it is giving them pause. I am wildly disappointed. We organize our gear on a big tarp, enter the brick hut at 9:01 P.M., and fall into our sleeping bags on wooden racks beside 20 snoring climbers from all over the world.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20

1 A.M.

13,976 FEET

I can't sleep. Instead, I lie awake with a painful stomach ache on the third-level slats, above Caroline and Grayson. I prepare to crawl out of my sleeping bag and tell them I am too sick to climb. Yeah, irony. But then my stomach settles a bit. I shake their feet, and they rise quickly. Multiple teams of guided climbers speaking different languages are rummaging through duffels and tying boots. "I just threw up on the way to the outhouse," Caroline announces. Grayson, who was sure he



Clockwise from top left: Leven; flying into Puebla; Grayson Schaffer's 1 A.M. breakfast; the soap factory; Gleich donning crampons



GUIDE GERARDO REYES THINKS IT BEST
IF WE PAY FOR THE DRIVER UP FRONT, BECAUSE
"*QUIÉN SABE LO QUE VA A PASAR.*"
WHICH MEANS, ESSENTIALLY: HE ISN'T SURE
we'll make it back alive.



Watch your figure.

49 PISTACHIOS

- 160 calories
- 6 grams protein
- 3 grams fiber



Watch your backside.

13 FLAVORED TORTILLA CHIPS

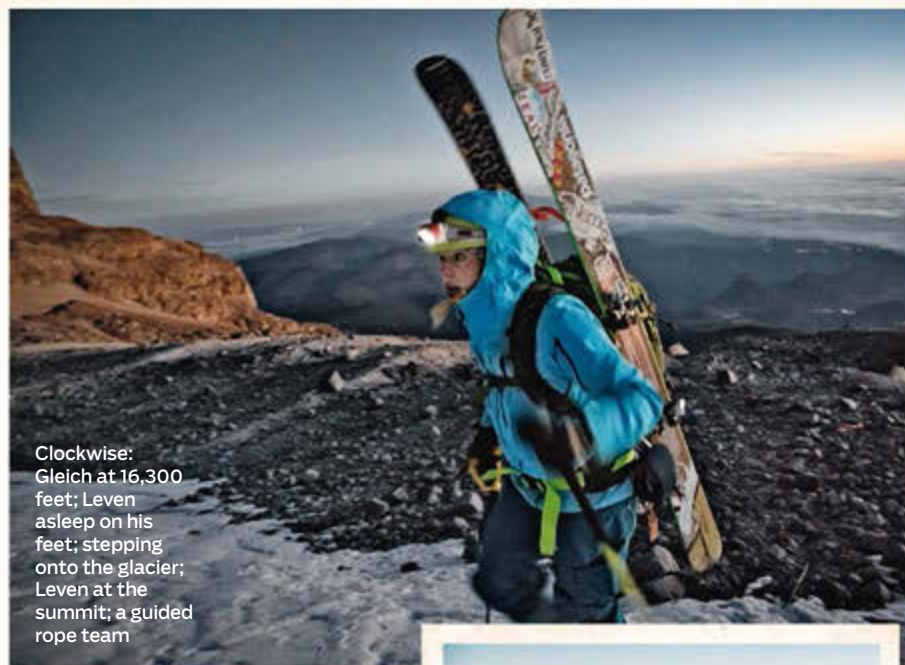
- 160 calories
- 2 grams protein
- 1 gram fiber

Let's do some snackin' math. For the same calories, you get a lot more pistachios than flavored tortilla chips. Plus, pistachios are a good source of protein and fiber, and heart-friendly. And, a recent Harvard study suggests eating nuts seven times a week or more is as healthy as it is smart. So next time you grab a snack, use your brains. Your backside will thank you for it.



Get Crackin'

Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as pistachios, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. See nutrition information for fat content. ©2015 Paramount Farms International LLC. All Rights Reserved. WONDERFUL, GET CRACKIN', the Package Design and accompanying logos are registered trademarks of Paramount Farms International LLC. WP12337



Clockwise:
Gleich at 16,300
feet; Leven
asleep on his
feet; stepping
onto the glacier;
Leven at the
summit; a guided
rope team



was the weakest member of our team, is suddenly the only one who is healthy. At 2:01 A.M., we start up the trail.

4:07 A.M.

15,100 FEET

It's still dark and we're moving well, chatting as we go. My stomach hurts, but it isn't slowing me down. We make our way through a confusing web of sandy moraine trails called the Labyrinth. We haven't yet seen the mountain we are trying to climb, but we have faith that it is there. "My head is starting to hurt," I tell my partners. "I need to slow down a notch." Grayson checks my pulse. Our skis and ski boots are attached to our backpacks. There is no snow in sight.

6:25 A.M.

16,400 FEET

There is a sliver of new moon above the eastern horizon. We sit on a cluster of boulders at the edge of the permanent snowfield. "We have lost over 60 percent of the glacier," Reyes would later tell us. "I think in the next 20 to 30 years, we will see it disappear." With the summit in view, we strap on crampons and tromp upward as the gathering shadow of the peak's massive triangle stretches out into the pinkening sky. Around us guided groups begin to emerge onto the glacier, climbing in rope teams of four. We are ascending unroped because we want the freedom to go off-trail to take pictures, and nobody wants to be the one who trips and pulls the other two off the mountain.

7:59 A.M.

17,900 FEET

My head hurts. A lot. It feels like my brain is about to explode. If it gets worse we'll descend. "Honestly, I thought this was going to be a gimme," Grayson says. But around 17,900 feet, the altitude has finally hit him, too, and he's slowed to a crawl. Caroline stays with him. I'm not sure if she's tired or just keeping an eye on him. This is exactly the challenge we came here to find.

8:30 A.M.

18,200 FEET

I doze off on my feet, my forehead propped up by my poles. I risk an uncontrollable tumble down the glacier and into the moraine 2,000 feet below. At this elevation, the glacier is steep enough to require concentration. Caroline has a reputation for being the bubbly girl with the blond ponytail in the Patagonia catalog, but she's powerfully built and is counting out steps with mechanized regularity. We spend enough time together on Instagram that people think we're dating, but she actually

THE SKIING IS TERRIBLE—BLUE ICE

ON A 35-DEGREE PITCH, AND IT'S
NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD AN EDGE.

THE CLOUDS MAKE IT SEEM LIKE WE'RE

skiing at jetliner altitude.

Clouds roll in
at 9 A.M. on
the descent.

GRAYSON SCHAFFER

friend-zoned me. “I did have to think about it,” she said, which was something. Grayson sits down and tries to will himself to eat and drink. He looks bad enough that one of the mountain’s other climbers tells him to stay alive. “You stay alive,” Grayson spits back.

9:11 A.M.

18,500 FEET

Summit. Caroline and Grayson arrive nearly 30 minutes behind me. The altitude got exponentially worse for Grayson with each foot of elevation, but Caroline helped him through it. We snap summit photos, but Grayson knows that he needs to start heading down. “Wow, there isn’t much snow,” Caroline says. It looks like a beach-volleyball court.

9:20 A.M.

18,470 FEET

Grayson makes his way to the snow slope, clicks into his skis, and barfs on them.

9:29 A.M.

17,600 FEET

The skiing is terrible—blue ice on a 35-degree pitch, and it’s nearly impossible to hold an edge. We are mostly sideslipping and scraping. The clouds roll in below and around us, making it seem like we’re skiing at jetliner altitude. My headache improves. Grayson is snapping photos but feeling awful. We ski about 2,000 vertical feet—similar to the descent at most major Rocky Mountain resorts—but the snow has the consistency of hockey-rink ice.

11:45 A.M.

16,000 FEET

Success? We feel decent enough. Grayson is eating and drinking. “It feels like a terrible hangover,” he says. Then he pukes again. We turn our backs. “If either of you were puking,” he says, “I’d be in your face with the camera and microphone.” “No, Grayson! We want you to get better!” says Caroline. We pushed it hard—really hard—but I don’t think too hard.

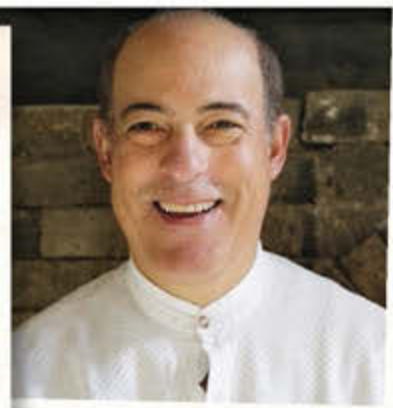
2:31 P.M.

13,976 FEET

Exactly 24 hours after our plane touched down at the Puebla airport, we take off our backpacks at Refugio Grande, having climbed and skied the tallest volcano in North America in a day. Caroline and I give each other high fives. We gather our gear and throw it into the truck. **O**

BRODY LEVEN, AN ADVENTURE SKIER SPONSORED BY SALOMON, SKIED ALASKA’S DENALI IN 2013.

Clockwise:
A view of the
receding glacier;
Leven, Schaffer,
and Gleich
post-climb;
Gerardo Reyes;
Gleich behind
the refugio;
almost home



ACCESS + RESOURCES

Pico de Orizaba is heavily guided from October to March (the dry season) but can be climbed year-round. Servimont is based in Tlachichuca, two hours southeast of the closest international airport, in Puebla, and is the perfect base to launch a saner three-day climb (servimont.com.mx). It offers fully guided trips or can set you up with a driver and camp minder.

How to Get There: United Airlines offers direct flights from Houston to Puebla for about \$500. From the East Coast, fly Delta through Mexico City, three hours from Tlachichuca.

Where to Stay: The bunkhouse at Servimont is clean and well appointed. If you need to over-night in Puebla, we recommend the Holiday Inn Puebla Finsa (from \$69; hinnpuebla.com.mx). It’s a short taxi ride from downtown, where you’ll find the Casareyna restaurant, which makes a mean mole and stocks every tequila you can name. —GRAYSON SCHAFFER

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SAGE CANADAY - HOKA ONE ONE FLITE MUT RUNNER



Porsche recommends **Mobil 1** and **Michelin**

It will get you places quickly. What a shame.

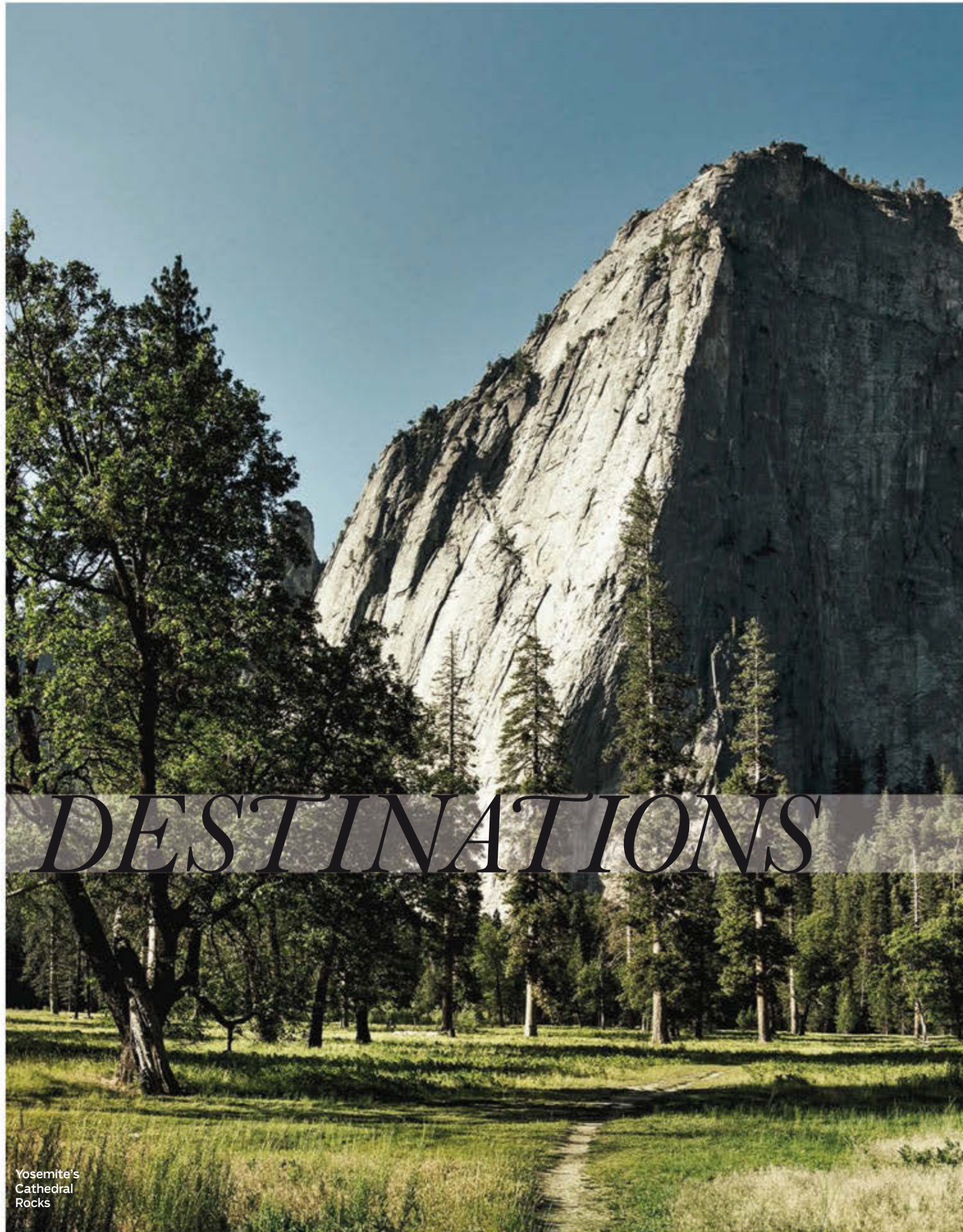
The 2015 Porsche Cayenne



In 2003, Porsche redefined what a sports car can be with the introduction of the Cayenne. Since then, each new generation of the Cayenne has been more powerful, more efficient and more innovative than the last. The 2015 Cayenne Turbo is the most powerful iteration yet, with a new 520 hp 4.8-liter twin-turbo V8, a top track speed of 173 mph and a 0–60 time of 4.1 seconds with Sport Chrono. And the kind of drive you won't ever want to end. Porsche. There is no substitute. porscheusa.com/cayenne



PORSCHE



Yosemite's
Cathedral
Rocks



Outside
ADVENTURE
issue

99 AND COUNTING

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY NEXT YEAR, MEANING HOOPLA, POO-BAHS, AND CROWDS. START EARLY WITH THESE ADVENTURES IN TEN CLASSIC—AND SHOULD-BE CLASSIC—PARKS. PLUS: GATEWAY ACTIVITIES, DAY-PASS GETAWAYS, AND THE FINEST NATIONAL EATS.

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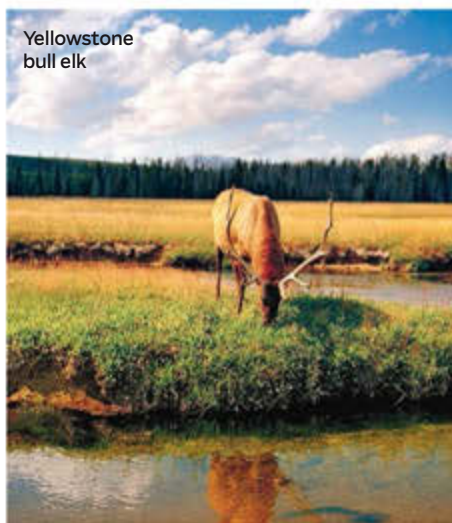
Mammoth
Hot Springs



Wyoming
soak

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WYOMING

Everyone should visit Yellowstone's trippy geysers and hot pools at least once. To avoid bus tours and traffic jams, go in the fall, when the park is mostly empty and the elk are horny and bugling. If you can't pull that off, there are ways to navigate the more crowded times. Jeremy Schmidt, author of National Geographic's *Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks Road Guide*, recommends Lone Star Geyser, a remote and less visited thermal area that erupts every three hours; it's located two miles from Grand Loop Road by foot or bicycle. Get farther off the beaten path by hik-



Yellowstone
bull elk

ing from the Heart Lake trailhead, near Grant Village, alongside hot-springs-studded Witch Creek, and pitch a tent on the shore of Heart Lake (backcountry permit, \$25; nps.gov/yell). It's a 23-mile route, with an

optional side excursion to 10,308-foot Mount Sheridan for views of the Absarokas to the east and the jagged Tetons to the south. Prefer to paddle? Access the Shoshone Lake Geyser Basin via sea kayak on a two-night, 30-mile expedition through the Lewis and Shoshone Lakes. Rent boats or sign up for a guided trip with Rendezvous River Sports in Jackson Hole (from \$720; jacksonholekayak.com). To see Old Faithful's otherworldly gallery of thermal pools, stay

at the Old Faithful Inn, which was constructed almost entirely from local lodgepole pine logs (\$108; yellowstone-nationalparklodges.com). —FREDERICK REIMERS

TRAIL MIX: Head south to Jackson's Snake River Grill for the steak tartare pizza with garlic aioli and capers.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: The fishing on the Snake River, just outside Jackson, is some of the best you'll find anywhere. Third-generation guide Boots Allen will ensure that you make the most of it (from \$475; snake-riverangler.com).



GIFT-SHOP KITSCH SABRE-TOOTHED CAT SKULL REPLICA

\$50-\$130
From South Dakota's Badlands, the nation's capital of paleontology. The original was found there in 2010 by a seven-year-old girl. —BEN YEAGER



DAY PASS

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS, NORTH CAROLINA AND TENNESSEE

Lose the other ten million annual visitors and hike up 6,593-foot Mount Le Conte to spend a night at the legendary LeConte Lodge (from \$136, by lottery; lecontelodge.com). Or start your day with apple fritters at Carver's Applehouse Restaurant near Cosby, Tennessee, then burn them off hiking five miles up 4,928-foot Mount Cammerer to an octagonal fire lookout built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. —AMANDA EGGERT

WHEN YOU REACH
THE END OF THE TRAIL

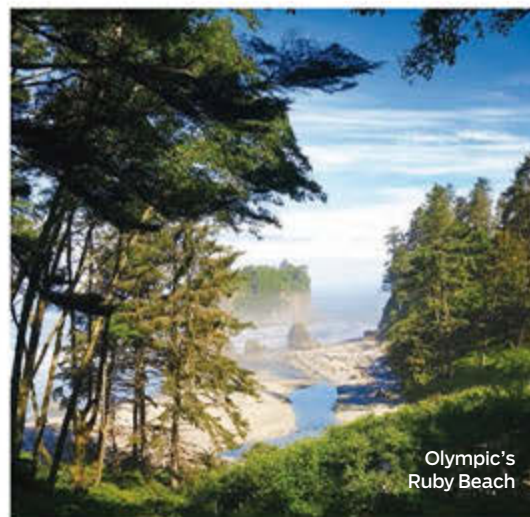
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Washington's
rainforest
lowlands



Olympic's
Ruby Beach



Lake
Crescent
Lodge



OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON

The massive Elwha Dam was removed two years ago to restore the river's salmon population. Paddlers are cheering, too, since this opened up an uninterrupted float through Olympic's former Lake Aldwell to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Go with Olympic Raft and Kayak, which is launching ten-mile trips through the lower dam site, including three miles of Class III–IV water (\$54; raftandkayak.com). A raft is the

perfect vantage point from which to spot eagles and other wildlife and to view the river's restoration up close. Also, the Boulder Creek Trailhead reopened last fall. (It was closed for three years during demolition of a second dam.) Now you can hike 2.5 miles to Olympic Hot Springs, a handful of clothing-optional, rock-ringed pools in the fir and hemlock forest along Boulder Creek. For a longer trek, the Hoh River Trail on the park's west end climbs 17.4 miles from the Hoh

rainforest to alpine wildflowers at Glacier Meadows. There you'll find the starting point to ascend 7,980-foot Mount Olympus. The choicest digs are the Roosevelt Cottages at 100-year-old Lake Crescent Lodge (\$279; olympicnationalparks.com), located just 30 minutes from the gateway town of Port Angeles. —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: For lunch, Port Angeles locals order the biscuits and gravy, sweet-potato fries, and homemade ice cream at

Granny's Café; for dinner, they congregate at the Next Door Gastropub for the green curry seafood with local Manila clams and cod.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: While the park boasts 70 miles of coastline full of secluded beaches and tide pools, there's also good surfing on Quileute tribal lands at First Beach. Fed by Pacific storm surges, the water is coldest in summer, so rent a five-millimeter wetsuit and a board at North by Northwest (\$40; nxnwsurf.com).

GIFT-SHOP KITSCH TEDDY ROOSEVELT BOBBLEHEAD

\$20 From North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the cattle ranch turned preserve that forged T.R. into the original Rough Rider. —B.Y.



DAY PASS

CONGAREE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Visitors can explore this little-known park by land or water. We like it wet: paddle Cedar Creek through swamp chestnut oaks and sweet gums. Bring bug spray—the mosquito populations can be formidable. Eighteen miles northwest in Columbia, enjoy regionally sourced shrimp and littleneck clams at Motor Supply Co. Bistro, then spring for a room downtown at the Inn at Claussen's, a boutique hotel in an old bakery (from \$139; theinnatclaussens.com). —A.E.

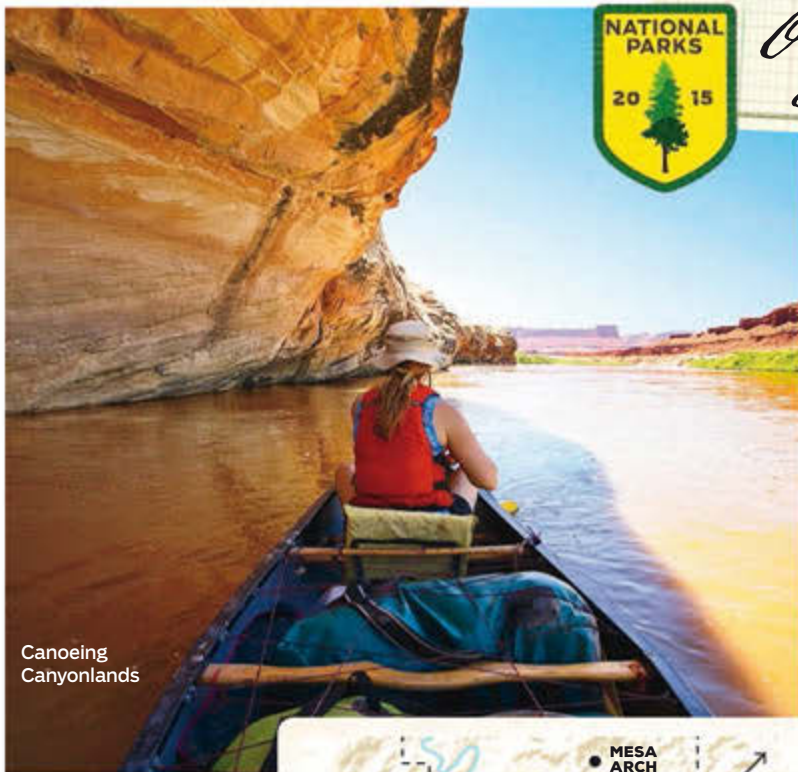


ANDREW PEACOCK

Last October, Peacock and his wife, Sabina, traveled from Santa Barbara, California, to Yosemite with plans to climb the steep south-to-north traverse of Matthes Crest, a fin of granite that tops out at 10,918 feet. Due to strong winds, however, they opted to hike a mellower portion. That didn't stop Sabina from walking out onto an exposed platform. "The thought of being blown off the ridge at any moment didn't appeal to us," says the photographer. "But she's solid on her feet. Having an ex-professional ballerina for a wife has its advantages."

THE TOOLS: Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24–105mm f/4 lens, ISO 160, f/6.3, 1/2,000 second





Canoeing
Canyonlands



57 Robber's
Roost



Needles
District

CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARK, UTAH

Split into three zones by the deep canyons of the Colorado and Green Rivers, and with limited road access, much of Canyonlands is impenetrable to casual sightseers. Venture deep into the red-rock desert on foot or boat, though, and you'll encounter a 527-square-mile empty playground of the surreal. In the Needles District, hike the 11 miles round-trip to Druid Arch through Elephant Canyon, a gallery of orange-and-white-banded pillars hundreds of feet tall. Or from the Elephant Hill trailhead, take the moderate but spectacular Chesler Park Loop into a sandy bottomland



punctuated by sandstone spires and deep, narrow rock corridors. To avoid crowds at the Island in the Sky's Mesa Arch, just a quarter-mile from the road, go at dawn for an unbeatable view of the Colorado River canyon. Summer visitors should

explore the Green River by canoe, where a cooling dip is a ready option. Put in at Mineral Bottom for a four-day, 52-mile Class I float, or head farther upstream of the park boundary for longer trips. Tex's Riverways in Moab will rent you a canoe and shuttle you to and from the river (\$155; texsriverways.com). Base yourself in Moab, where Up the Creek Campground offers walk-in camping adjacent to burbling Mill Creek (\$32; moabupthecreek.com). Or rent

a two-bedroom condo downtown at 57 Robber's Roost (from \$329; 57robbersroost.com). —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: In Moab, try the bacon and green chile Wescial burrito at the Love Muffin Café for breakfast, and make dinner reservations at the Desert Bistro for Gorgonzola-crusted beef tenderloin.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: Six years ago, Moab locals plotted 150 miles of new trail, 90 of which have been built—like Hymasa, Captain Ahab, and the Magnificent 7 system. The Porcupine Rim Trail will also serve up everything you can handle. Rim Tours offers guided rides with shuttles (rimtours.com).

DAY PASS BIG BEND, TEXAS

The best way to get lost in this park's 1,250 empty square miles is to canoe through the narrow walls of Mariscal Canyon on the Rio Grande. Big Bend River Tours in Terlingua will set you up on a guided trip or an independent float (from \$60; bigbendrivers.com). Back in Terlingua, the Starlight Theatre serves up boar strips and live entertainment most nights of the week (thestarlighttheatre.com). —A.E.

GIFT-SHOP KITSCH GIANT SEQUOIA SAPLING

\$11 From California's Sequoia National Park. The clipping may look puny, but plant it in your yard and the world's tallest tree might outlive you by 3,000 years. —B.Y.



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THE
Outside
ADVENTURE
issue



Humpback
whale breach,
Kenai Fjords
National Park

KENAI FJORDS NATIONAL PARK, ALASKA

Kenai is a 669,983-acre rampart of rock, crevasses, and impenetrable ice on the Gulf of Alaska shore, but don't be intimidated—that's why you're going. The park is a two-and-a-half-hour drive south of Anchorage and just ten miles from the harbor town of Seward. One of the best hikes is at Exit Glacier: a steep four miles alongside the edge of the icy slope, the trail yields impressive views onto the large Harding Icefield. But the park is best seen by boat. Take an overnight sea-kayak tour with Kayak Adventures Worldwide, which includes a three-hour boat ride to 22-mile-long fjord Aialik Bay, where you'll see whales, sea otters, sea lions, and puffins (\$699; kayakak.com). You'll paddle along the mile-wide face of Aialik

Glacier, then head two miles south to camp near Pedersen Glacier's lagoon, with a maze of icebergs to explore. For a softer landing, the 16 cabins at Kenai Fjords Glacier Lodge are also on a beach near Pedersen Lagoon and are the only lodging within the park's boundaries (\$725, meals included; alaskawildland.com). —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: Head to Chinooks in Seward for cod hauled off the boat that morning (chinooksbar.com).

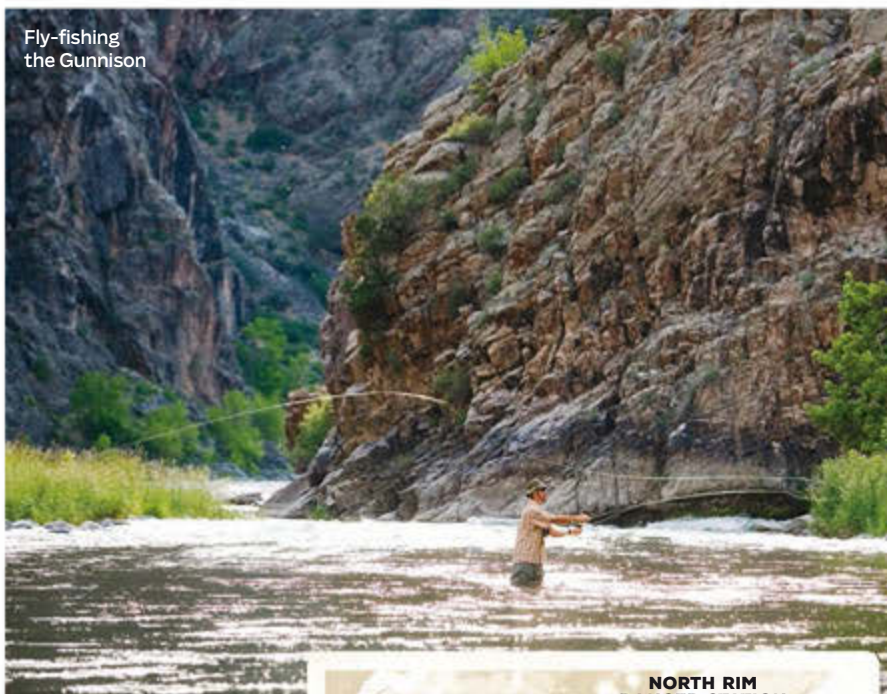
GATEWAY ACTIVITY: Seward is spectacular in its own right, set at the end of glacially carved Resurrection Bay. Reserve one of three waterfront cabins at Angels Rest (\$239; angelsrest.com).



DAY PASS MAMMOTH CAVE, KENTUCKY

It's not all underground. Mountain bikers have free rein on 25 miles of unpaved trails here, and the singletrack is sweet. Charge across a ridgetop on the Big Hollow Trail, then spelunk by lantern on a ranger-led evening Star Chamber tour. Camp at Houchins Ferry Campground on the Green River (from \$12; nps.gov/mac) and feast on *arni youvetsi* (braised lamb and orzo) and baklava at Anna's Greek Restaurant and Bar in nearby Glasgow. —A.E.

KAITLIN THORESEN



Fly-fishing
the Gunnison

BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO

The majority of visitors to Black Canyon never make it past the rim, but it's hard to blame them: the routes descending the 2,000-foot gorge to the churning whitewater of the Gunnison River follow steep, unmaintained gullies, some of which require technical-climbing skills. For those who do go deeper, the rewards are great: world-class trout fishing, limitless rock climbing, and stunning views of the granite walls on either side. To keep it mellow, hike the two-mile Oak Flat Trail, which dips 400 feet into the gorge on a maintained section, or walk the three-quarters of a mile out to Warner Point, the park's highest spot. If you go all the way down, the best camping is on the riverside beach at the bottom of the Warner Route, a six-hour round-trip scramble from Warner Point. You'll need a free backcountry permit even for a day trip, which can be picked up at the South Rim visitor center or North Rim ranger station.



To scale one of the Black's legendarily long and airy routes—like six-pitch, 5.9 Maiden Voyage—book a day with Irwin Guides (from \$265; irwinguides.com). —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: Head to Camp Robber, 24 minutes from the park in Montrose, and fill up on sirloin or chile relleno, the house speciality (camprobber.com).

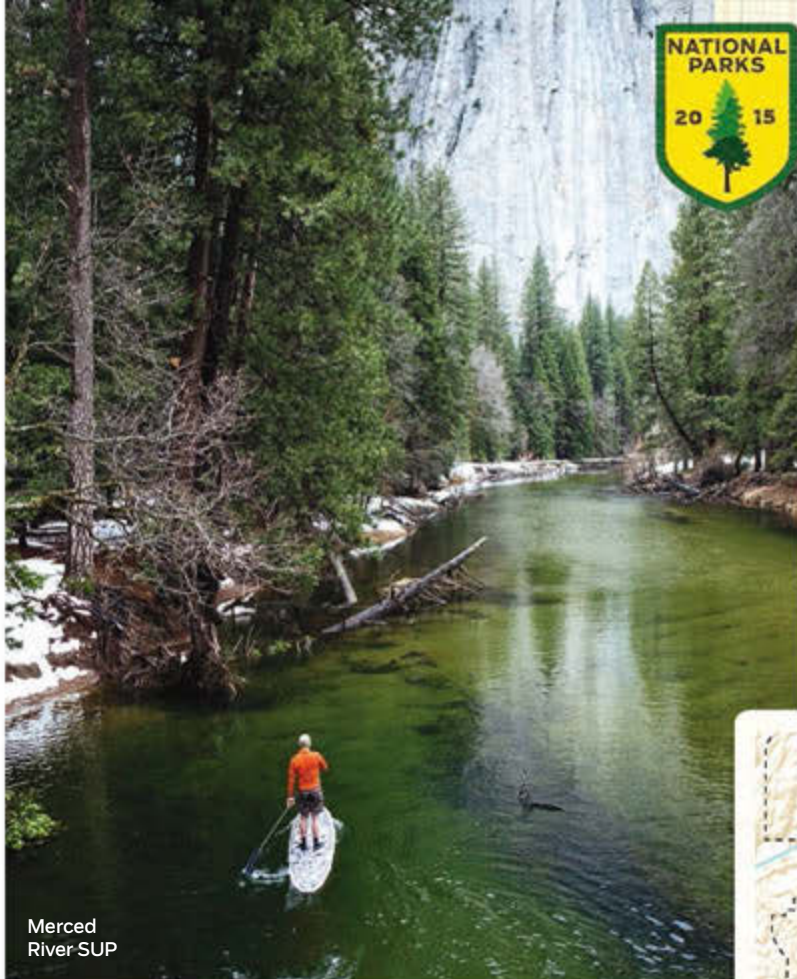
DAY PASS HALEAKALA, HAWAII

To explore this park's enormous volcano by foot, hike four miles along Sliding Sands Trail, dropping 2,500 feet into the crater. Or do it on wheels: Haleakala Bike Company will shuttle you up to the crater's lip for sunrise and outfit you with a mountain bike for the 23-mile, 6,000-foot descent (\$135; bikemaui.com). Stay at Makawao at the Banyan Bed and Breakfast, a former plantation with pool and yoga studio (from \$155; bed-breakfast-maui.com), and stock up on cream puffs at the Komoda Store and Bakery. —A.E.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: Recuperate after your canyon adventure at Gunnison River Farms, a 1,200-acre spread near Austin with six renovated cabins, farm-to-table dining, and an on-site fly shop. Fish the farm's river-front, or just take a cooling plunge from the six-foot diving platform into the pond (\$85; gunnisonriverfarms.com).

THE VODKA THAT'S ALWAYS UP FOR ADVENTURE.

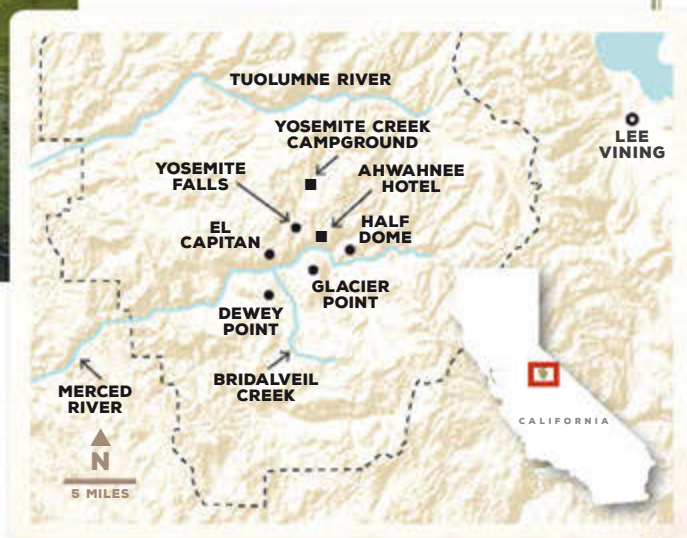




Merced River SUP



Yosemite Falls



YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

With its iconic rock domes, 200-foot sequoias, and 2,000-foot waterfalls plunging over sheer granite walls, Yosemite may be the most spectacular spot in the lower 48. Which is why it gets so crowded in summer. Our recommendation? Go early (April) or late (October) in the season, and avoid weekends. But go, by all means. Our favorite hikes include the seven-mile round-trip, 2,500-vertical-foot trail to the top of Yosemite Falls; it's steep, but the views are sensational. For an overnight, cross the valley and backpack the 14-mile Pohono Trail from the Tunnel View parking lot on Wawona Road. You'll get views of the valley and El Capitan from Dewey Point. Camp at Bridalveil Creek (\$5 per

person; nps.gov/yose) and detour to the rim for views of Bridalveil Fall. The hike ends at Glacier Point, where you can catch a shuttle to the valley or hike down via the eight-mile Panorama Trail to see Liberty Cap and Half Dome in the distance. To get vertical, rope up with Yosemite Mountaineering School, which offers group lessons on classic crags (from \$148; yosemite mountaineering.com). Or book climbing instruction and scale long routes like Nutcracker—a five-pitch, 5.8 climb—or 16-pitch Royal Arches,

one of the finest in the world. Stay at the Ahwahnee, an art deco masterpiece with 30-foot ceilings in the dining room and three huge fireplaces in the lounge (from \$490; yosemite park.com). Rather sleep under the stars? Head to Yosemite Creek, a remote, first-come, first-served spot on Tioga Road. —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: Fuel up at the Whoa Nellie Deli at the Mobil station in Lee Vining if you're coming

or going via Tioga Pass. The order: buffalo meatloaf or fish tacos with ginger coleslaw.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: Some of the best white-water rafting in the world

is found on the rivers flowing out of the park. Sign up for a day trip on the Class IV Merced or an overnight on the Class IV Tuolumne (from \$144; oars.com).

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DAY PASS ROCKY MOUNTAIN, COLORADO

Celebrate the park's 100th birthday, which is a year ahead of the national parks centennial. Skip the crowds on Longs Peak and head up 11,586-foot Little Matterhorn, a 5.5-mile hike from the Bear Lake Trailhead. Back in Estes Park, soak in your own private streamside hot tub at the simple StoneBrook Resort (from \$159; stonebrookresort.com), then try the elk medallions at Twin Owls Steakhouse. —A.E.

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ELLIOTT BERNHAGEN

After four days of climbing in Utah's Zion National Park last November, Bernhagen, who lives in Sandpoint, Idaho, took a rest day at a nearby house with views of the park's iconic sandstone spires. He was supposed to be taking it easy, but instead the photographer drove back to the park just before sunset and sprinted up a hill, hoping to capture 1,488-foot Angels Landing, a desert cliff in the middle of Zion Canyon. Explains Bernhagen: "When the light is that good, you've got to go for it."

THE TOOLS: Canon 5D Mark III, 16–35mm f/2.8 lens, ISO 200, f/9, 1/100 second





Sunset
over the
Everglades



Kayak break
on the 10,000
Islands route

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK AND BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE, FLORIDA

Dry season is the time to visit the Everglades. From October to April, the rain subsides, mosquitoes disappear, and wildlife is easier to spot. Alligator sightings are all but guaranteed on a day paddle of the Turner River, and manatee and sea turtle encounters are common. Arrange a shuttle and kayak rental from Everglades Adventures for the 11-mile paddle from the put-in at Highway 41 back to the park's Gulf Coast visitor center in Everglades City (\$75; evergladesadventures.com). The paddling starts in a freshwater cypress swamp and ends in brackish man-

groves, with open marshland and plenty of wildlife in between. You'll likely have it to yourself on a weekday. Experienced paddlers can take longer expeditions through the Wilderness Waterway, a 99-mile maze of sloughs and mangroves, or along the coastal 10,000 Islands route. You'll camp on beaches or on chickees, docklike platforms built over the water. Grab a backcountry camping permit at the visitor center (from \$12; nps.gov/ever), and be sure to pack fresh water—there's none along the route. The paddle from Everglades City to Flamingo, at the park's southernmost

point, takes about a week, and Everglades Adventures will shuttle your car to Flamingo for \$420. When you've made it back to Everglades City, recuperate by the pool or on the screened porch of the Ivey House inn (\$99; iveyhouse.com). —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: Get lunch at Havana Café on Chokoloskee Island (in the bay south of Everglades City), known for its

paella and key lime pie.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY:

The 51 species of coral are the main attraction at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park on Key Largo, 30 miles from the Everglades' east entrance (pennekampnpark.com). The park includes 72 square miles of water, and just 100 feet off Canon Beach are artifacts from a 1725 Spanish shipwreck that are easy for snorkelers to explore.

DAY PASS GRAND CANYON, ARIZONA

On the park's less crowded North Rim, start at Cape Royal Road and hike two miles out on the Cape Final Trail to the canyon's edge. Time your arrival for sunset. Take in the stars at the North Rim Campground (from \$18; recreation.gov), or rent a rustic cabin at the Grand Canyon Lodge, perched on Bright Angel Point (\$116; grandcanyonforever.com).



Outside
ADVENTURE
issue

An egret
in a cypress
swamp





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Outside
ADVENTURE
issue



CHRIS BURKARD

Burkard, who lives in San Luis Obispo, California, traveled to Yosemite last October to hike 4,800-foot Half Dome but made a detour to Glacier Point Road, where the dome suddenly comes into view after a series of undulating curves. The 16-mile road is closed in winter, due to snow, but on this particularly quiet autumn afternoon it made a perfect surface for skateboarder Anders Johnson to carve up. "It's fine to see Yosemite from your car," says the 29-year-old photographer, "but I'm always looking for new ways to experience it. This was one of those moments."

THE TOOLS: Sony Alpha a6000, 24mm f/1.8 lens, ISO 160, f/1.8, 1/200 second

holy\$#*!fit



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Outside ADVENTURE issue

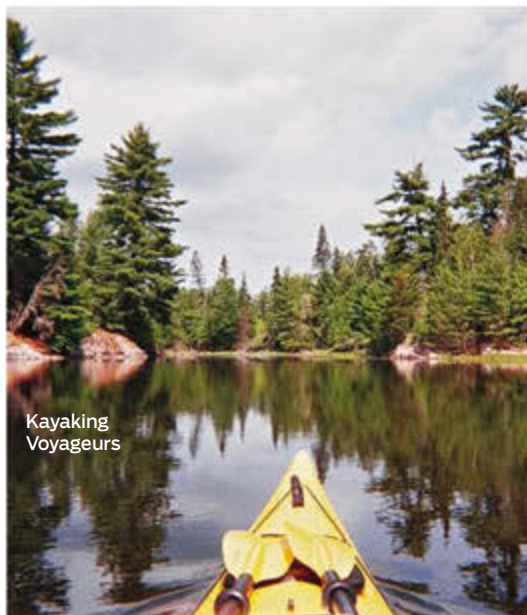


A slice of the park's 5.1 million acres of lakes and forests



VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK, MINNESOTA

With 30 lakes and some 1,000 islands splashed across the Minnesota-Canada border, Voyageurs is a paddler's paradise. Explore 600 miles of bedrock shoreline and camp among spruce and birch forests, trolling for walleye or casting for northern pike. Head out for a night or two via kayak or canoe to one of the park's 270 designated campsites, which can be reserved online up to six months in advance (from \$16; recreation.gov). Or go for the grand tour: a five-night, 80-mile loop through the park's three largest lakes, with just two portages. Start from the Kabeto-



Kayaking
Voyageurs

gama Lake visitor center and head west toward the half-mile Gold Portage trail to 360-square-mile Rainy Lake. Take a few

days to paddle the south shore, ducking behind islands if big waves arise. At Kettle Falls, stop by the historic inn, accessible only by boat, where you can have a meal and get your boats trucked across the quarter-mile-long portage to Namakan Lake (\$5). Take a few more days to explore Namakan's smaller inlets and passages, swinging by 125-foot-tall Grassy Bay Cliffs, and



Fitger's
Brewhouse
in Duluth

make your way back to Kabetogama Lake via Blind Indian Narrows. Houseboats cruise the park, and they'll be your primary competition for campsites. If you can't beat them, consider joining them. Voyageaire Lodge and Houseboats in Crane Lake, at the park's southeast corner, will rent you a boat with a gas grill and a hot tub on the roof. The Sportcruiser, with five double beds, goes for \$605 a night (voyagaire.com). You'll get a tutorial before you're sent on your way. The most popular three-night route? A visit to Kettle Falls. —F.R.

TRAIL MIX: A trip to Voyageurs will likely involve a stop in Duluth, about 2.5 hours south of the park. Swing by Fitger's Brewhouse to see which of its 100-plus beers are on tap (brewhouse.net). And order the burger: it's made from cattle raised by the brewery and fed spent grain from the brewing process.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: In Duluth, get out on Lake Superior. North Shore SUP rents paddleboards for exploring and leads Great Lakes SUP-yoga sessions (rentals, \$15 an hour; classes, \$25; duluthsup.com).

DAY PASS

GRAND TETON, WYOMING

Maybe it's the name that scares away the crowds, but Death Canyon, with its moose and fields of Indian paintbrush, isn't anything to be afraid of. Hike eight miles out and back to the junction of Static Peak Trail, or continue on for the full 16 miles round-trip to the 11,294-foot summit. Refuel in Jackson with a pulled-pork sandwich and a pint of See You in Hells at Snake River Brewing Company before heading to your cabin at Fireside Resort (from \$199; firesidejacksonhole.com). —A.E.

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—WILL DIETRICH-EGENSTEINER



Made of high-carbon steel, **Esee Knives' Esee-3** (from \$170; eeseeknives.com) has a four-inch fixed blade designed for hardcore special-ops and survival missions. It laughs at whatever you put it through, whether that's cutting paracord or pieces of salami.



A collaboration between pack maker **Topo Designs** and apparel designer **Howler Brothers**, the **Topo x Howler Klettersack 15L** (\$179; topodesigns.com) features 1,000-denier Cordura, leather lash tabs, and side pockets for fly rods. Stash a hydration bladder in the padded inner sleeve.



The cotton-poly blend in **Howler Brothers' H Bar B shirt** (\$65; howlerbros.com) is quick drying and wrinkle-resistant, meaning you won't look like you just hiked a bunch of grueling switchbacks, even if you did. A micro-fiber hem keeps sunglasses smudge-free.

The plush padding in the heel and tongue remind us of the kicks we wore to ollie curbs in high school. But the **Forsake Mack** (\$110; forsake.com) has breathable mesh sides, a foam midsole, and thick tread that transform it from a street shoe into a lightweight all-terrain monster.



A high-grade leather cover and thick, grainy saa paper, fashioned from sustainable mulberry bark, make **Rogue's Medium Backpack journal** (\$38; roguejournals.com) the ultimate adventurer's log.



Maven's B.3 binoculars (\$530; mavenbuilt.com) are made with phase-correction coating and extra-low-dispersion lenses to keep color-contrast and images crisp. The 10x30 pair delivers high-end light transmission even in twilight—perfect for snooping on unsuspecting wildlife.



United by Blue's Ultimate American socks (\$38; unitedbyblue.com) are made with bison wool—which, thanks to its downy fibers, is lighter than sheep's wool. It also regulates temperature better.



Canon squeezed a three-inch screen onto the slim **PowerShot SX710 HS camera** (\$350; usa.canon.com), so you won't have to squint to see your 21-megapixel nature shots and 1080p video. The Story Highlights function pulls your photos into a reel that you can share via Wi-Fi.

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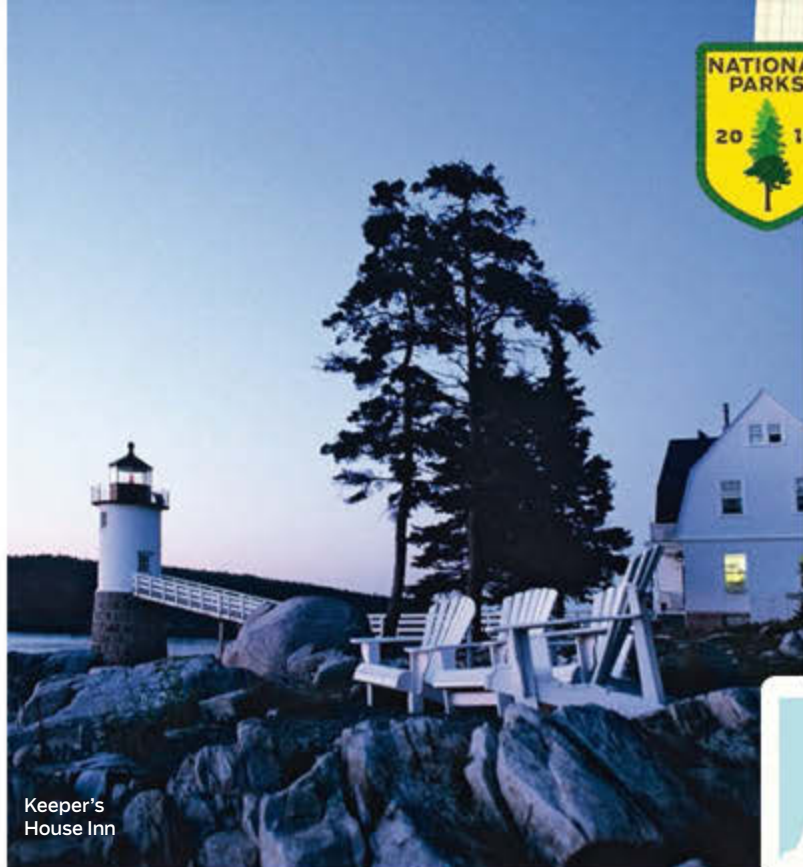
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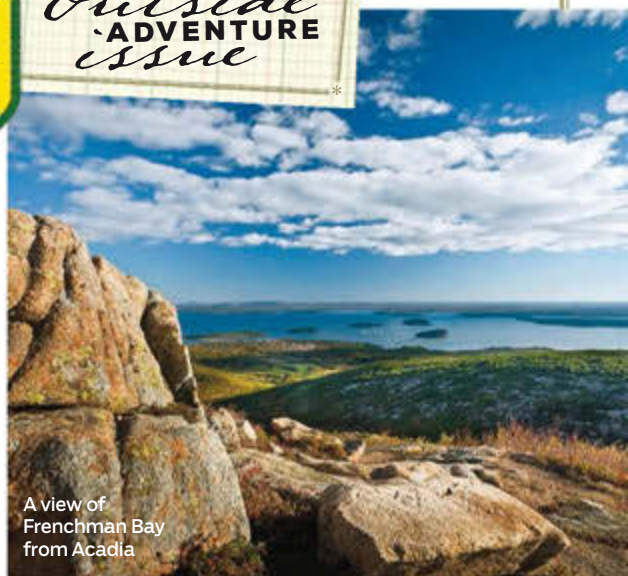
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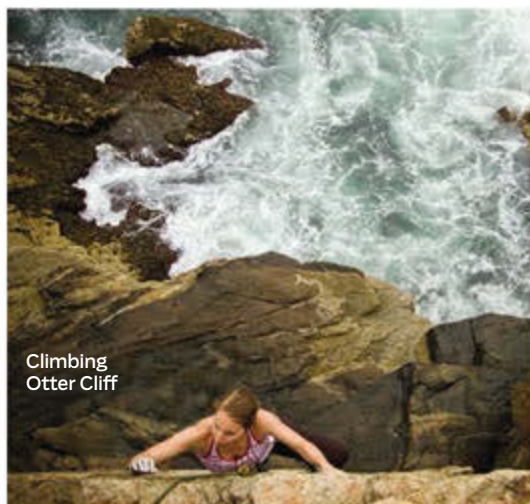
Outside ADVENTURE issue



Keeper's
House Inn



A view of
Frenchman Bay
from Acadia



Climbing
Otter Cliff

ACADIA NATIONAL PARK, MAINE

Acadia's granite bluffs are iconic. Less well known: you can climb many of them. Otter Cliff, on Mount Desert Island's east coast, is one of the best places to scale sea cliffs in the country, with routes from 5.5 to 5.11. Inland, the south wall of Champlain Mountain has multi-pitch trad climbing and views of the Atlantic. Acadia Mountain Guides

Climbing School in Bar Harbor can arrange a trip for you and your crew (from \$99; acadia mountainguides.com). Pitch a tent at Blackwoods Campground, a beautiful forested spot that fills up quickly in high season (reservations available up to six months in advance; \$22; recreation.gov). Looking for something more remote? Take the mail boat from nearby Stonington to 5,400-acre Isle au Haut for

a night at the Keeper's House Inn, a working lighthouse (from \$325, all-inclusive; keepershoused.com). Hike the island's rugged southwestern coast, then ride one of the inn's loaner bikes to Long Pond for a dip. —A.E.

TRAIL MIX: The fireplace and copper tables give McKay's Public House in Bar Harbor a cozy feel, and its local-catch fare elevates the food above standard pub grub (mckayspublichouse.com). Wash the seafood risotto down with a pint of Bar Harbor

Real Ale from nearby Atlantic Brewing Co.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: Every Friday, Portland Paddle offers two-hour moonlight sea-kayaking trips along Casco Bay (\$45; portlandpaddle.net). You'll launch at 7 P.M. in Portland, three hours south of the park.

DAY PASS

HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

You're here to relax. That said, warm up with a 13-mile Sunset Trail hike through pines and hardwoods on 1,209-foot Sugarloaf Mountain. Then head to historic Bathhouse Row for a soak at Quapaw Baths and Spa (quapawbaths.com) and a Hitchcock Spring Kölsch at the Superior Bathhouse brewery (superiorbathhouse.com). Stay in nearby Lake Ouachita State Park, where you can swim and fish and bunk in a lakeshore cabin (\$185; arkansasstateparks.com/lakeouachita). —A.E.



GIFT-SHOP KITSCH ORIGINAL GRAND CANYON MULE-SHOE

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Recycled from the hooves of the beasts that have carried tourists and mail to the iconic park since the 1880s. —B.Y.





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Outside
ADVENTURE
issue

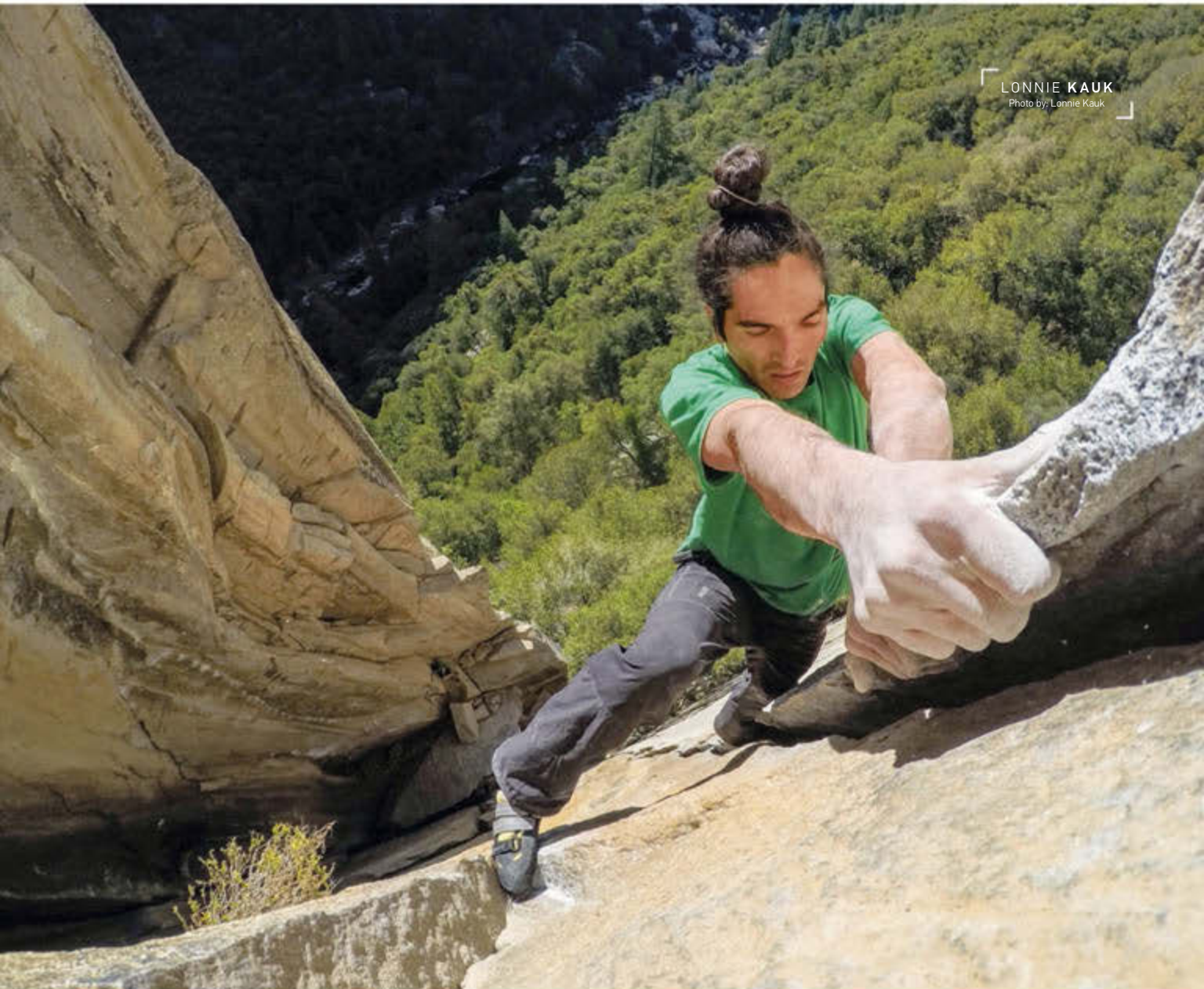
FOREST WOODWARD

In December 2013, Woodward rafted the Grand Canyon with his father, Doug, who had paddled the same stretch in a homemade kayak with a group of Explorer Scouts in 1970. Though camping restrictions are tighter now, and motorized rigs are more popular, the river hasn't changed much. "Everything has been so incredibly preserved over the years," says the Brooklyn, New York, photographer. "The height and colors of the cliffs evoke the same feeling of smallness for everyone, no matter the age."

THE TOOLS: Canon 5D Mark III, 70–200mm f/2.8 lens, ISO 100, f/2.8, 1/4,000 second

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LONNIE KAUK
Photo by: Lonnie Kauk



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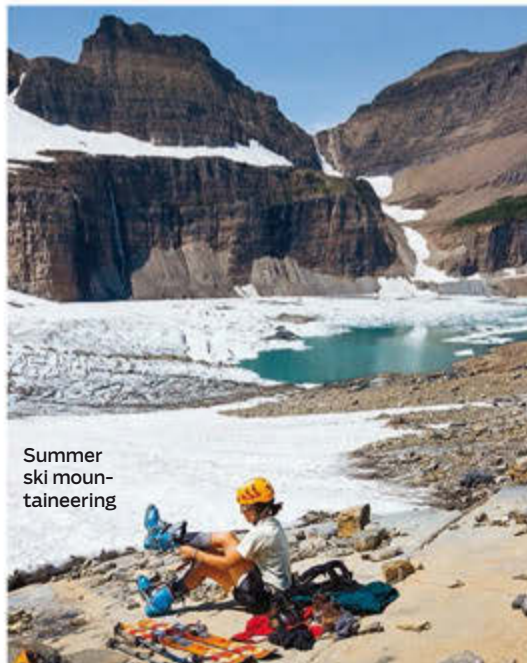




Outside ADVENTURE issue



Geared up for a trek through Glacier backcountry



Summer ski mountaineering



Paddling the park's glassy waters



GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MONTANA

File this one under go before it's gone. When the park was created 105 years ago, 150 of the namesake glaciers dotted the landscape; now there are fewer than 30. Hike four miles along the Loop

Trail to the 100-year-old Granite Park Chalet, your backcountry base camp for an exploration of the stunning Grinnell Glacier, a 1.5-mile hike away (from \$100; graniteparkchalet.com). Or take to the water: driving 30 miles up bone-jarring gravel roads to Kintla,

one of the northernmost lakes in the park, might take a toll on your suspension, but your reward is a translucent body of glacial meltwater surrounded by larch forest. Load up your canoe for a three-mile paddle to the six-site campground at the head of the lake. Pack bear spray and some rope to hang food; this is grizzly country (backcountry camping permit from \$5; nps.gov/glac). —A.E.

the tastiest huckleberry bear claws in the lower 48. The Merc has sandwiches, beer, espresso, cabin rentals, and other essentials, and has served this remote outpost for over 100 years.

GATEWAY ACTIVITY: With more than 50 miles of lift-served downhill

and cross-country trails, Whitefish Bike Park, a 40-mile drive from West Glacier, is an up-and-coming mountain-biking destination (from \$22; skiwhitefish.com). Check out Kashmir, a black-diamond trail full of jumps and banked corners.

DAY PASS CHANNEL ISLANDS, CALIFORNIA

They don't call them the Galápagos of North America for nothing. Charter a boat with Santa Barbara-based Truth Aquatics for a day of sea kayaking and diving on Santa Cruz—the biggest, most biologically diverse of the park's five islands (from \$100; truthaquatics.com). Camping is allowed, or head eight miles west of Santa Barbara to the surf-chic Goodland hotel for fish tacos and craft cocktails (from \$179; thegoodland.com). —A.E.

TRAIL MIX: Located 36 miles northwest of West Glacier, Polebridge Mercantile and Bakery is off the grid (polebridgemerc.com). But that doesn't prevent it from making

GIFT-SHOP KITSCH ALLIGATOR WOODKIT

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BODYWORK

05.15

Alternative Energy

ARE BIOHACKERS ON THE LEADING
EDGE OF SCIENCE OR JUST LOOKING
TO MAKE A QUICK BUCK?
A LITTLE OF BOTH, PROBABLY.

by Erin Beresini

IN 2004, an overweight tech entrepreneur from the San Francisco Bay Area named Dave Asprey traveled to Tibet in search of enlightenment—and he found it in a cup of yak-butter tea. “Science says I should’ve been feeling like a zombie,” Asprey says, referring to the altitude and his poor health, “but I felt amazing.”

When Asprey returned home, he worked up a Westernized version of the Tibetan brew that combined a specially formulated, low-

toxin coffee with concentrated coconut oil and grass-fed butter. Asprey credits the recipe with helping him lose 100 pounds and giving him more energy and improved brain function. The company he launched to sell the ingredients, Bulletproof, has become synonymous with the drink, which, thanks to endorsements of butter-enriched coffee from CrossFit junkies, the Los Angeles Lakers, and Gwyneth Paltrow, is trending. According to Asprey, Bulletproof’s revenues have increased 700 percent since 2013.

Now the 42-year-old is hoping to build on Bullet-



proof's success by carving out a lead role in an emerging movement known as biohacking.

Promising human performance boosts through everything from superfoods (fish oil) and data tracking (neurofeedback) to personalized health testing (blood panels) and fringe technology (electric brain stimulation), biohacking has all the trappings of the self-improvement industry repackaged for the plugged-in athlete or edge-seeking CEO. Think Tim Ferriss's human-lab-rat approach in *The 4-Hour Body* mashed together with the whiz-bang gadgetry of SkyMall and the altruistic business jargon of Silicon Valley. Asprey is not the only entrepreneur embracing the biohacking movement, but he's already its biggest player. He now runs the annual Bulletproof Biohacking Conference, a three-day, \$1,599-per-ticket event in Pasadena, California, featuring dozens of speakers and hundreds of participants, as well as the website BulletproofExec, which sells wellness products—including a \$30-per-ounce antiaging serum and a \$50 sleep-induction mat—and produces the top-rated health podcast on iTunes. (Sample episode: "Keto-sis and Oxygen Toxicity.")

Biohacking, thanks to Asprey and Bulletproof coffee, is having a moment, one that feeds on the same desire to locate performance shortcuts that fuels the supplement industry. But it's hard to separate the bona fide claims from the bogus ones, especially given how broadly biohacking is defined. Judging by the vendors at Bulletproof's conferences, radical groups like transhumanists—who implant magnets and computer chips in their bodies—as well as anyone with a sleep-monitoring app on their smartphone all fall under the biohacking umbrella. And much of what the companies are selling doesn't exactly sound new.

"There's a lot of salesmanship and a lot of hype," says Marc Hellerstein, a professor of metabolic nutrition at the University of California at Berkeley. "Since the ancient Greeks, people have been trying to improve health. Calling it hacking is just putting a techy, 21st-century name on it."

Still, there are a handful of things that make biohacking novel. The first is self-experimentation. Thanks to the proliferation of wearable tech and fitness trackers, a slew of personal data is now available to anyone who wants it. You can moni-

BY THE NUMBERS

20

IQ POINTS BULLET-PROOF FOUNDER DAVE ASPREY CLAIMS TO HAVE GAINED THROUGH BIOHACKING

tor blood-glucose levels, muscle activation, and heart-rate variability with a single device. It costs only \$50 for a DNA or biomarker test from diagnostic companies like 23andMe and InsideTracker, and you can learn a lot from the data—especially if you're willing to pay to have it analyzed by professionals and adjust your diet and exercise habits accordingly. But, cautions Hellerstein, not everything being tracked is useful. "What they need is to find out what to measure," he says. Steps walked in a day, for example, shouldn't be a primary indicator of good health.

Another tenet of biohacking is the use of health-data crowdsourcing through sites such as CureTogether and Patients-LikeMe, which allow large groups to compare research results without relying on government- or university-funded studies. In 2008, after hearing that lithium carbonate may help treat ALS, some individuals who suffered from the disease began taking the substance to see whether it had any

effect. They uploaded their findings to a website, and a neuropsychologist crunched the data. Conclusion: the drug wasn't effective. Many believe similar efforts could allow clinical trials to be conducted faster and on a larger scale than ever before. Biohackers find this research approach particularly promising. Mainstream doctors don't believe their claim? No problem. They'll crowdsource the data to back it up.

Of course, such studies would probably be conducted with little to no oversight, which is a third factor common in the biohacking movement. The FDA doesn't regulate many of the products associated with it, and without peer review, crowdsourced studies do little to guarantee the safety of any particular hack. Sometimes people go overboard. Says Rhonda Patrick, a fellow at the Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute, "That might mean being too enthusiastic with dosage and taking drugs that have negative long-term side effects that haven't been figured out yet by the academic community."

Still dying to join the movement? Start small, and do your research. (See "Science or Snake Oil?" below for a rundown of five common biohacks.) In the meantime, save the butter for your toast. **O**

Science or Snake Oil?

Charting which biohacks are legitimate and which are better left alone —E.B.

Go For It →

Electric Brain Stimulation

THE CLAIM: Attaching electrodes to your temples and running light electrical current through your brain can help with anxiety and insomnia, increase your pain threshold, and improve reasoning.

THE REALITY: Scientists have investigated transcranial direct-current stimulation, or tDCS, since the 1960s and found that it can do all those things. What they don't know: the long-term effects, good or bad. That makes tDCS a gamble—especially if you self-administer.

LSD

THE CLAIM: The hallucinogen enhances creativity.

THE REALITY: It does. Researchers are also enthusiastic about using it to treat cancer patients, alleviate depression, and boost well-being, if the drug is administered in a controlled environment.

Fitness Trackers

THE CLAIM: Data-collection gadgets motivate people to be active.

THE REALITY: Wearable tech may not accurately estimate calories burned or distance traveled, but research shows that it can make us move—if we keep using it. Thirty percent of us ditch trackers within six months.

Don't Bother →

Whole-Body Vibration

THE CLAIM: Standing on a pulsating plate strengthens the immune system, stimulates brain function, improves strength, and slashes recovery time.

THE REALITY: Studies have shown that whole-body vibration is unlikely to affect immunity and may actually impair brain function. It could be useful for reducing muscle soreness, but no more than light exercise.

Bulletproof Coffee

THE CLAIM: Bulletproof's Upgraded coffee contains lower levels of mycotoxins—carcinogenic chemicals produced by molds; butter from grass-fed cows helps maintain healthy cholesterol levels; and MCTs, fatty acids found in coconut oil, promote high energy levels, fat loss, and improved brain function.

THE REALITY: The quantity of mycotoxins in coffee isn't considered harmful by the FDA. (In fact, the toxins are found in numerous foods, including beer, wine, and peanut butter.) Some studies suggest grass-fed butter doesn't provide any health benefits, and butter of any kind may increase bad LDL cholesterol. Evidence that MCTs boost energy and brain function and promote long-term fat loss is flimsy at best.

Perpetual Motion

EVEN IF YOU RUN EVERY MORNING AND STAND INSTEAD OF SIT AT YOUR DESK ALL DAY, YOU MAY BE DYING INSIDE

by Rosie Spinks

YOUR WORKOUT shouldn't end when you get to the office. A recent study in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine* found that "prolonged sedentary time was independently associated with deleterious health outcomes regardless of physical activity." For peak health, in other words, you need to move. Constantly.

"Your body requires low-grade movement throughout the entire day for basic biological function," says Katy Bowman, a biomechanist and author of *Move Your DNA: Restore Your Health Through Natural Movement*. "It has almost nothing to do with athletic performance—it has to do with your body's circulation and feeding its cells." Try these five strategies for a more mobile day.

THINK SMALL

Little movements and stretches, done continually throughout the day, are the most beneficial. Use a rolled up yoga mat to stretch your lower calves and foot tendons while standing and talking on the phone. Or sit on the edge of your chair with your left foot on the floor. Place your right ankle on your knee to stretch your piriformis, a muscle deep in your hip. Switch legs throughout the day.

HANG OUT

Just dangling from a door-frame-mounted chin-up bar for one minute every hour will reverse some of the effects of sitting.

SEEK HELP

Apps like Move (iOS; free; moveit.move.it) remind you to take an active break at various intervals during your day. Ten push-ups

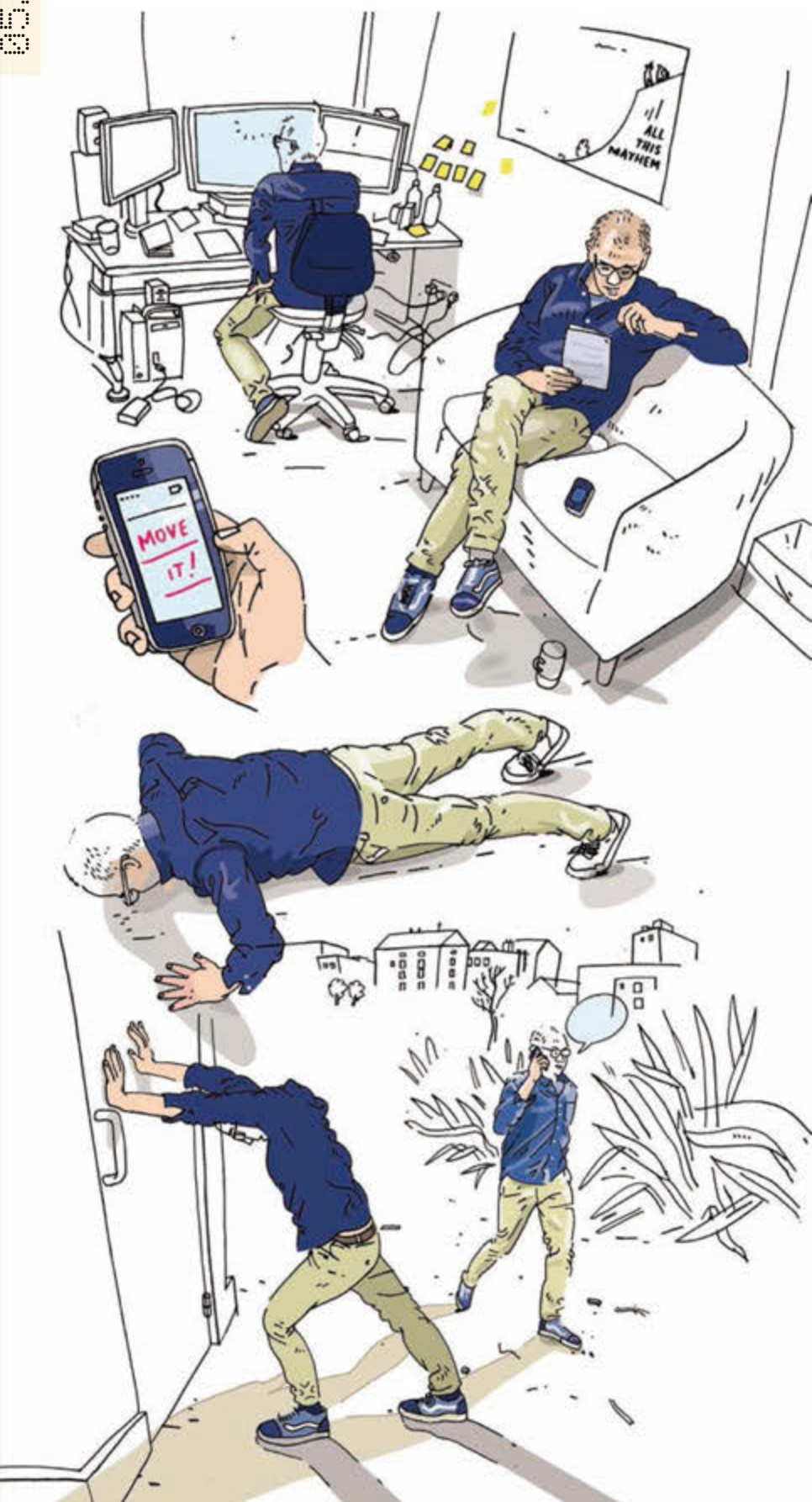
here and 20 squats there provide an entirely different set of benefits than a one-hour, high-intensity workout at the end of the day.

WALK AND TALK

Save up four or five work phone calls and make them all on a walk around the office neighborhood. Or ask your 2 P.M. meeting to join you on a stroll instead of in the conference room. Walking for just two minutes every half-hour can make a huge difference to your arterial health.

SIT LOOSE

When you're forced to sit for sustained periods, there's no need to stay in your chair with your hips at a 90-degree angle and your feet flat on the floor. Sit cross-legged on the ground or move from the couch to the desk every hour to break up your body's geometry.





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Gels Go Au Naturel

A WAVE OF RECENT ORGANIC FRUIT AND VEGGIE POUCHES DON'T NEED TO BE REFRIGERATED AND ARE EASY TO STUFF INTO A PACK OR JERSEY POCKET. TAKE ONE ON A HIKING TRIP OR A LONG BIKE RIDE FOR A HIT OF HEALTHY, FILLER-FREE ENERGY.

by Will Dietrich-Egensteiner

Clif Bar

Organic Energy Food \$2.25

Savory flavors like sweet potato with sea salt contain fat and protein to fuel all-day efforts, while sugary options like banana, mango, and coconut give a quick boost of carbs. clifbar.com

Plum Organics

Vida \$2

Each 80-calorie bag is a mix of fruit and vegetables—and that's about it. Comes in three

flavors, including pineapple with carrot and mint, and pear with kale, spinach, and celery. plumorganics.com

PowerBar

Performance Energy Blend \$2.50

Fruit purees provide both glucose and fructose, which has been shown to raise carbohydrate oxidation and deliver more energy to muscles during exercise. Also nice: vitamins C and E. powerbar.com



POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Cyclists have been using power meters for years, because they're the most accurate way to gauge effort while training. But runners don't have a mechanical lever to measure torque—like a cyclist's pedals—so they've had to rely on an inexact combination of heart rate and pace to estimate their output. That's why engineers at the Boulder, Colorado, startup Athlete Architect created Stryd, the world's first power meter for runners. Strap the quarter-size disc to your shoe and an algorithm uses acceleration and a host of other variables to gather data on the energy produced by your steps. Android and iOS; \$150; stryd.com — BEN YEAGER

BRING (MORE THAN) THE NOISE

The wireless, waterproof Bragi Dash earphones store and play 4GB of songs and podcasts uploaded via Bluetooth. But the real advantage: they provide heart-rate measurements and oxygen-saturation data without a chest strap. Control playback via the glowing, tap- and swipe-sensitive exterior. \$300; bragi.com



THE OUTSIDE FITNESS COACH

Q: Why am I sorer two days after a hard workout than I am after the first day?

A: Second-day aches, or delayed-onset muscle soreness, are the result of micro-traumas that spark an inflammatory healing response. According to Robert Amrine, a sports-medicine physician, when a muscle is strained beyond its adapted usage, the cells discharge an abnormal amount of calcium. This prompts the release of proteases and phospholipases, hormonal enzymes that clean up and repair the damaged tissue. As this occurs, the surrounding nerve fibers become increasingly sensitive. The whole process takes about 24 hours to start working and can peak 72 hours after activity, which is why the pain is often more noticeable on day two. The best fix? Active recovery, like a light jog or easy bike ride.

—MEAGHEN BROWN

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: HANNAH MCCAUGHEY; COURTESY OF STRYD; COURTESY OF BRAGI; SANDRO DI CARLO DARS/GETTY

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Max King

AGE 35
5 FEET 6 INCHES
135 POUNDS
BEND, OREGON

STARTING IN 2007, King, a standout cross-country runner, spent a year and a half training exclusively for the steeplechase. The result? The worst national-championship race of his life. (He didn't even advance out of his first-round heat.) A week later, to vent his frustration, King signed up for his first 50K—and won. Since then the Oregon native has become one of the most versatile and successful distance athletes in the country. This year, King took home a \$30,000 purse from the 5K Warrior Dash National Championship in Esparta, California, then went on to win the 100K World Championship in Doha, Qatar. Next year he hopes to diversify his portfolio yet again by qualifying for the Olympic marathon in Brazil. —JOE JACKSON



→“When you do the same thing over and over, the returns become increasingly smaller. You always need a new stressor. That’s why I’ll do obstacle-course races and ski mountaineering; they seem different than running, but the movements are really similar, and they’re great for cross-training.”

→“If you pick it right—whole-wheat bun, organic lettuce and tomato, grass-fed beef—a burger can be pretty healthy.”

→“You can train until your legs fall off, but if you don’t have your nutrition on point, you are going to have a tough race. I eat 300 to 400 calories per hour in gel form. The only way to find how much is right for you is through trial and error. It took me three years to dial it in.”

→“When I’m out on a run, I like to pick up a rock and let its weight dictate the exercise I do. Using whatever is around is a lot more fun. I don’t get in the gym and do the same set of weights every day. That won’t give you all-around fitness.”

→“A lot of people get their run in, then go straight to work and forget about taking the time to stretch or take care of their bodies. Runners are particularly guilty of going hard all the time and not thinking about rest—but that’s when you get better. After each workout, I’ll do 20 minutes of yoga, then put on Normatec recovery boots for an hour.”

→“Don’t run too hard. Get a heart-rate monitor and stay between 60 and 70 percent of your maximum during your base period. It’s going to feel slow, but to get better you need to run easier.”

→“You can do anything with the right pair of shoes. But it’s confusing: there are as many shoes out there as there are people. Go to a specialty running store, try a lot of things on, and get fit by someone who does this for a living. Don’t go in with the idea that the shoe that works for your friend will also work for you.”

→“My beer has gotta be dark—the thicker, the better. I want my fork to stand up in it.”

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GOLEAN IS MY FUEL.

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*5g Fat per serving

Adventure
issue 2015
PARAGLIDING

CLOUD

THANKS IN PART TO ADVANCES IN WING TECHNOLOGY, *a few*
BY COMPLETING LONG-DISTANCE FLIGHTS THAT
WILL GADD AND GAVIN MCCLURG *pulled off one*
385 MILES DOWN THE JAGGED, FROZEN, POTENTIALLY DEADLY



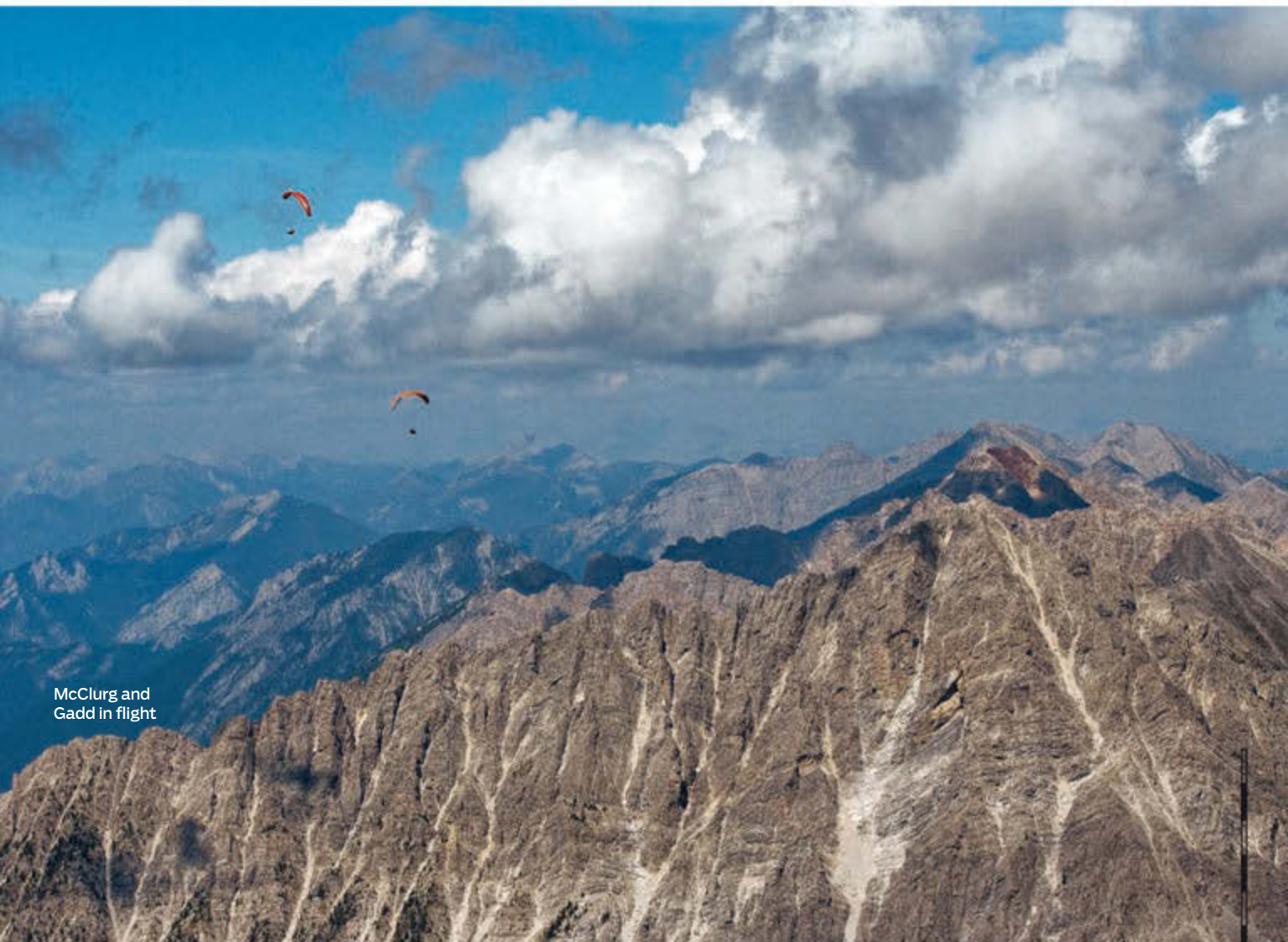
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JODY MACDONALD

McClurg preparing
to launch near
British Columbia's
Mount Dainard

HOPPERS

pioneering paragliders ARE SMASHING THE LIMITS
WERE ONCE THOUGHT IMPOSSIBLE. **LAST SPRING, HIGH-FLIERS**
of the most ambitious trips ever attempted:
SPINE OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES.

by Michael Behar



McClurg and
Gadd in flight

IT'S SHORTLY AFTER FIVE

on the evening of August 1, 2014,

AND THE WINDS ON MOUNT ROBSON ARE CALM,

the sky is sapphire, and the sun is blazing, pushing temperatures to a near record 83 degrees. Robson—at 12,972 feet the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies—is so far north that darkness won't fall here for several hours.

Suddenly, a red streak flits past the summit. Next, an orange blip loops into view. They're paragliders, two of them, waltzing with the mountain, which looks like a Giza pyramid clad in ice. For nearly an hour, Will Gadd and Gavin McClurg soar like lazy raptors.

Climbers descending Robson's south face stop to watch, dumbfounded. From above they can hear howls of joy. "Will was screaming the whole time," McClurg, 43, tells me a few days later, while we're camped in a

neighboring mountain range.

"I never thought it was possible," says Gadd, 48, a renowned paraglider who has set several distance-flying records in the sport. He's also an accomplished ice climber, having won almost every major competition there is. Gadd lives in Canmore, Alberta, and knows Robson well. That's because in 2002—on his fifth attempt—he completed the first one-day ascent of the peak. "I failed to summit Robson four times," he says. "But flying paragliders over it? It had never been done or even seriously considered."

Clouds usually shroud Robson's glaciated flanks, while high winds often scream across its summit. "There are only about ten

clear days a year up there," Gadd says, adding that the area is just too remote, and the weather too volatile, for unpowered flight. This is the case throughout much of the Canadian Rockies, where almost nobody does long-distance paragliding. Roads and trails are scarce, making it virtually impossible to reach points high enough to launch from. As for landing, you'll likely end up trapped in some far-flung, timber-choked valley. "You simply can't walk out," Gadd says. "I know these mountains, and if you don't fly out, you'll die back there."

Despite the dangers, Gadd and McClurg set out last summer to paraglide down the spine of the Canadian Rockies, from McBride,



British Columbia, south to the U.S. border in Montana, a distance of 385 miles. They christened their adventure the X-Rockies, a nod to the Red Bull X-Alps, a paragliding adventure race held every two years in Europe.

Gadd has competed in that event, but what the two are attempting in the Canadian Rockies is riskier. "The Alps are extremely accessible," says veteran paraglider Bill Belcourt, vice president of the U.S. Paragliding Team and director of research and development for Black Diamond Equipment. "There are no downsides to flying there. People live everywhere. Roads are everywhere. In Canada, you have much, much higher objective hazards—there are critters that can eat you—so you don't want to screw up."

McClurg offers another perspective. "We are breaking the number-one rule you learn when you start paragliding, which is never fly over somewhere that you don't have a place to land," he says. "Here, we're going hours without a place to land."

MCCLURG LIVES in Sun Valley, Idaho, where he moved in 2012, fed up with life at sea after 13 years running yacht charters. (He has sailed around the world twice.) He's also a former ski racer and an elite kayaker who has made Class V first descents in Central America. In 2003, McClurg took up paragliding and later embraced a style of the sport known as *vol biv*, from *vol bivouac*, a French phrase that roughly translates to "flight and sleep." Pilots use specially designed packs they can wear in-flight, carrying tents, sleeping bags,

clothing, food, stoves, and handheld avionics. During the day they soar; by night they sleep, wherever they happen to land.

In 2012, McClurg set off on his first *vol biv* expedition—18 days and 500 miles—up the spine of the Sierra Nevada, from Southern California to the Oregon border. Along with two other pilots, he completed 13 flights, parts of which had never been done with a paraglider before. While not nearly as remote or technically difficult as the Canadian Rockies—the terrain offered plenty of landing sites, and the pilots had vehicle support along most of the route—it was an impressive accomplishment for a newbie.

McClurg went for it again in 2013, hoping to fly from Hurricane Ridge, in southwest Utah, to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, a distance of some 500 miles. "But the weather killed us," says McClurg. In the end, they eked out just 60 miles before calling it off. Shortly before the expedition, in July, while training near his home in Sun Valley, McClurg set the world record for the longest single foot-launched paragliding flight—seven hours and 240 miles, from Bald Mountain,

Idaho, to just outside Helena, Montana.

A paraglider uses what's called a wing, which is fashioned from high-tech fabrics. It's shaped like a parabola, but with a flattened vertex (the top of the arc). Wings range in size, with the largest spanning about 30 feet. A paraglider gets lift the same way planes do: from pressure differences between air traveling over the top and bottom surfaces of the wing.

Today, most paragliders do what they've always done: hitch a ride up a mountain to launch, soar for a few hours, and then glide to a predetermined landing spot. Flying long distances with a wing is a somewhat recent phenomenon, particularly when it's done for consecutive days or weeks at a time.

Russell Ogden, a test pilot for Ozone, a paraglider manufacturer whose innovations have revolutionized wings, told me, "Paragliding is a niche sport, and *vol biv* is a niche of that niche." But *vol biv*, he says, "has become massive in the past ten years," thanks to advances in performance. Many give credit for these advances to a French paraglider and naval architect named Luc Armant, who went to work for Ozone in 2008, joining its R&D team.

A typical wing is made of reinforced rip-stop nylon and polyester, into which baffled chambers called cells have been sewn. To launch, a pilot slips into a harness and then runs forward while tugging on suspension lines to hoist the wing aloft. When air enters vents along the wing's leading edge, the cells puff up like a windsock in a stiff breeze and give the paraglider its shape.

Three sets of suspension lines used to be standard. All those lines provided stability but also generated a significant amount of drag. Armant created a wing with just two line sets. To compensate for the loss of stability, he incorporated spaghetti-thin plastic fibers—literally, weed-whacker line—into the baffled cells. Doing so dramatically cut drag, thereby increasing efficiency in the air, and it wasn't long before most other manufacturers started producing their own versions of the two-line wing. Nick Greece, an accomplished paraglider and editor of *Hang Gliding and Paragliding* magazine, says Armant's

**MCCLURG AND GADD HAVE EMBRACED
A STYLE OF LONG-DISTANCE PARAGLIDING
CALLED VOL BIV, FROM VOL BIVOUAC, A FRENCH
PHRASE THAT ROUGHLY TRANSLATES
to "flight and sleep."**

design was a game changer. “Previously, we were doing 100-mile flights,” he says. “Now we were easily doing 160-mile flights, and then a 200-mile flight came next.”

Electronics are helping, too, especially bread-crumbs trackers, made by companies like DeLorme and Spot. These handheld devices transmit position, speed, and altitude at regular intervals—typically every ten minutes—to GPS satellites, which relay the data to the Internet, where a paraglider’s route is viewable to anyone online. With trackers, pilots can instantly see where they’ve been and where they’re going while airborne.

More than anything, though, vol biv is happening because Gadd and McClurg, along with a small cadre of like-minded pilots, are rewriting the rules of the sport.

“This trip will change the worldview of anyone paying attention to bivvy flying,” Bill Belcourt says. “All of a sudden, what you thought was daunting might seem not that bad. It changes your perspective. It’s like climbing with Alex Lowe. He had a way of making everything look a lot flatter.”

GADD AND MCCLURG planned the X-Rockies expedition over e-mail and by telephone. Practically strangers, they didn’t meet face-to-face until just before their first day out, hiking together for an hour up one of the few trails decent enough to get them to their planned launch site at 6,788 feet. They were hauling 60-pound packs stuffed with supplies, their wings carefully folded inside.

When it was go time, at around 1 P.M., they unfurled their wings. They launched from a narrow alpine meadow perched barely above tree line, “with enough rocks and angle to make it technical,” Gadd recalls. The margin for error was zero. By 5 P.M., they were soaring around Mount Robson. During that historic flight, Gadd told himself, *If we can fly over Robson, we can fly over anything.*

They got two more days of good weather—clear skies, light winds—before conditions swiftly deteriorated. Nearby wildfires spewed thick smoke, reducing visibility. Gustly winds and frequent thunderstorms forced them to detour into increasingly isolated terrain. By the end of day four they were separated. Gadd stayed above tree line and landed in a high meadow. McClurg struggled to reach him but couldn’t gain altitude. With nowhere to set down safely, he crashed into the shoulder of Karluk Peak, slamming face-first into a rock.

I set out to catch up with them a few days later. On August 5, I fly into Calgary and rent an SUV at the airport. Over the next two days, I drive more than 350 miles with Jody MacDonald, who is on hand to photograph the

expedition. She’s married to McClurg, and she was already a paraglider when they met in 2003. In fact, she gave him his first lesson.

We head northwest, toward British Columbia. Gadd and McClurg are carrying an arsenal of technology, including satellite phones, VHF radios, and the bread-crumbs trackers. I can obtain their tracker data with my iPhone. I can also type text messages into a website that relays them to their trackers. But none of this helps us get anywhere near them. They are simply too deep in the backcountry—at least 20 miles from the nearest road.

About 30 hours after we leave Calgary, near Revelstoke, B.C., I get a satellite text from McClurg: “Bring fresh underwear.” In the midst of circumnavigating peaks, crossing crevasse-riddled glaciers, and vaulting chasms, McClurg apparently needs a change of skivvies. “It’s not unusual for him to shit his pants,” MacDonald informs me. She’s laughing, but she’s also serious.

Red Bull Media House is paying the costs of a big-budget, six-person film crew, which is trailing Gadd and McClurg in a helicopter for part of the expedition, dropping supplies while they’re at it. The crew’s boss, Elizabeth Leilani of Reel Water Productions, manages to reach me during a brief period when my cell phone has coverage. “Come to Mica Creek,” she tells us. “The heli is there, and we can bump you up to the guys.”

I scour a topo map and locate Mica Creek at the northern frontier of B.C.’s Monashee Mountains. Six hours later I’m in the heli, its blades thumping east. We head toward a cluster of glaciated peaks—collectively known as the Continental Range—scattered across a 25,000-square-mile wilderness that straddles the crest of the Canadian Rockies.

A thunderstorm is barreling toward us, spitting rain and sleet at our windscreen. The pilot, who had been chatting us up over the headsets, goes silent. He wrestles the heli through buffeting crosswinds and then points the nose toward a knife-edge ridge. Looking down I can see a meadow, perhaps an acre in size, wedged into a rocky nook. Two tents are visible: one is lime green, the other gold. The heli lands with a plunk. By now the storm is on top of us, a black fury of clouds and howling winds.

CLUTCHING MY backpack, I leap out. The pilot guns the throttle and roars off. McClurg emerges from the green tent, a little wobbly, and gives me a hug. He was asleep, snoozing on his bunched-up wing, and my arrival startled him. There’s a dime-size scab on his upper lip and bloodstains on his wing. I’ve known McClurg since 2005, and every time I see him he looks like he just got back from



Gadd after a high-alpine landing



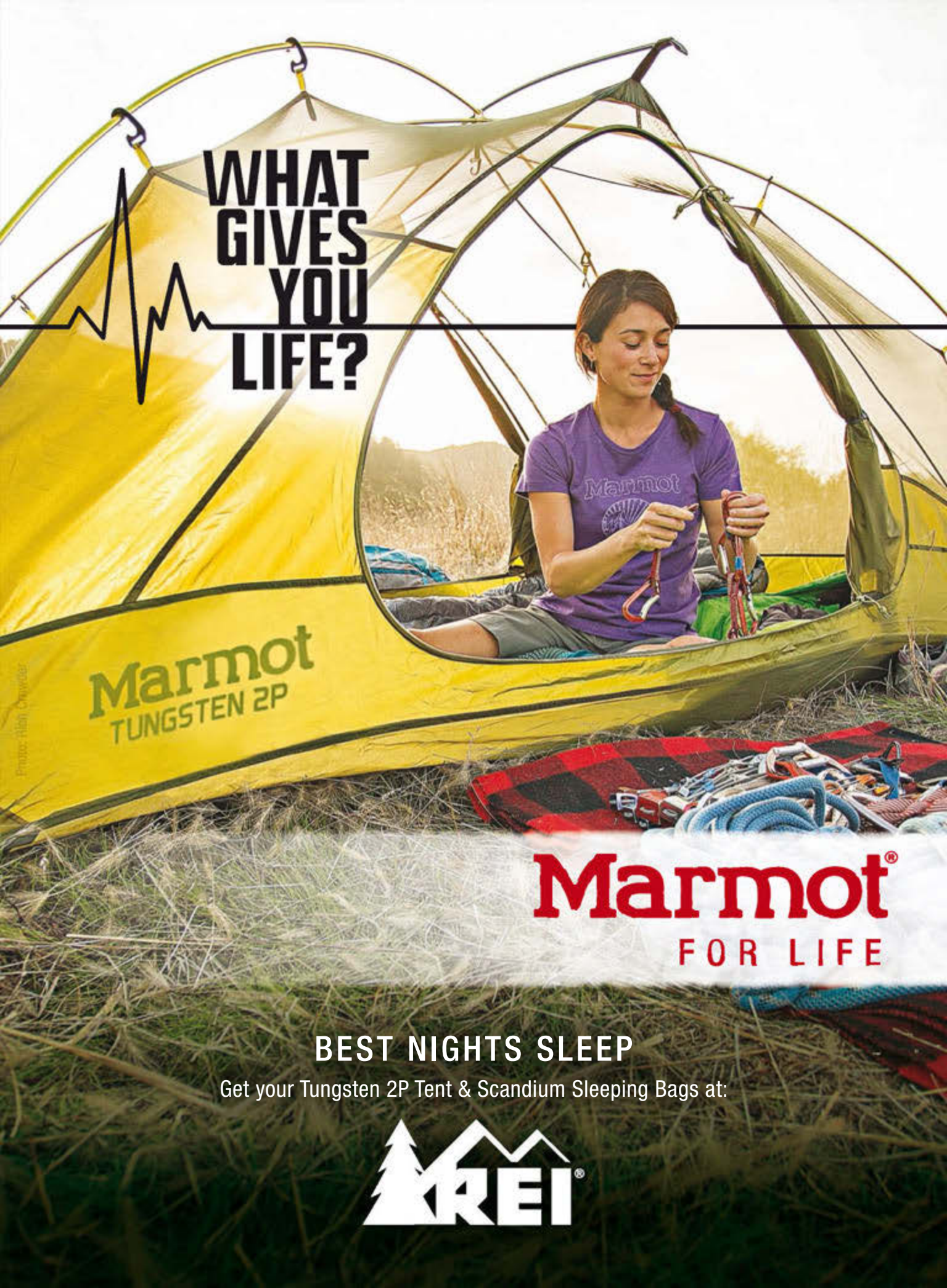
McClurg hiking near Banff National Park



McClurg on a launch

a two-week beach vacation—deeply tanned, his tousled brown hair veined with sun-bleached highlights.

By the time sunset arrives, the skies have cleared to reveal a buckled and contorted macrocosm of rock and ice extending to all horizons. We boil ramen, and I ask McClurg to recap his crash. “When Will and I got separated, I got into a bad hole and couldn’t climb out,” he says. With daylight dwindling, he knew he had to get down. But where? He had already covered 20 miles and hadn’t spotted a single clearing. A controlled crash



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into a mountainside was the only option.

"It was a really scary, terrifying place to be.... And that's how I hit my face," he says. "It could have gone so much worse. I got really lucky." He shook off the crash and scrambled to a ledge beneath 10,167-foot Karluk Peak to pitch camp. In the morning, desperate to find Gadd, he launched but quickly discovered that he didn't have enough lift to get over the next ridge. So he circled back and landed where he started. He tried again and finally achieved a successful flight. As McClurg would later record in his journal: "I was completely frazzled ... dehydrated and low blood sugar, scared, knew I shouldn't be flying."

McClurg headed south and found Gadd camped where we are now. Gadd spotted McClurg approaching and got on the radio to warn him away from landing. "It's too on!" he yelled. "The conditions are just too strong!"

In mountains like this, whenever the sun is out, the ground heats up, radiating warm air, which rises into cylindrical columns called thermals. Fly into one and you get good lift, like stepping into an elevator heading toward

says. Stay on a cloud street and you can leap-frog from thermal to thermal. But thermals don't always form where you want to go. Or they can become too strong, making high-alpine landings about as easy as swimming up a waterfall.

McClurg heeded Gadd's advice and aimed for a nearby drainage. As he approached, his wing partially deflated, which is called a collapse. Seconds before plummeting into a stand of 50-foot-tall subalpine firs, he skidded into a narrow glade, only a short hike away from Gadd. "I was ecstatic to be back together again," McClurg says.

OUR CAMP, at 6,800 feet, is situated directly beneath the west wall of Mount Dainard, a 500-million-year-old marble-and-limestone slab that amplifies the thunder when squalls rip through. For three days the weather is spasmodic, alternating between rain, hail, lightning, wind, and sun. Gadd and McClurg hole up in their tents, usually napping.

At first, McClurg was ready for a break, but after two days he can't sit still. If the sun

wasn't beaten for a decade. "But equally important to me are the many firsts I've done," he says. This includes a paragliding flight over Independence Pass in Colorado, as well as several new routes over the U.S. and Canadian Rockies.

Long before Gadd started paragliding, he was steeped in alpinism. His parents, who raised him in Calgary and Jasper, started taking him to the mountains when he was a toddler. Gadd is five foot eleven and lanky, with long, sinewy arms—ideal tools for a world-champion ice climber.

"Willie was on 5.6's and 5.7's by the time he was five," his father, Ben Gadd, told me. "He is very connected with real-world adventures. He also just likes to show off. Since he's been really little, it's 'Watch me do this, watch me do that.' He's not the sort of guy who wants to climb all the 8,000-meter peaks. He wants to go to one and have a video running, because he's a performer as much as an athlete."

Like many alpinists who've seen friends die or get injured while climbing and paragliding, Gadd has become adept at mitigating risk. In camp he entertains us with his favorite almost-got-killed tales. There's the time he was paragliding in Mexico and his wing spiraled so violently that G-forces caused him to black out momentarily. Or when he was paragliding near Boulder, Colorado, and hit a powerful wave of air that whisked him up to 18,000 feet in only minutes, the lack of oxygen temporarily blinding him. These mishaps have left Gadd with a pragmatist's instinct.

"Willie describes it as the power of negative thinking," says his father. It's a response, explains Gadd, "to being surrounded by too many fucking pathological optimists. If you always think positive thoughts, you might have super high confidence, but you're going to get bit."

"IT WAS A REALLY SCARY, TERRIFYING PLACE TO BE," MCCLURG SAYS OF A CONTROLLED CRASH HE TOOK ON A MOUNTAIN SIDE.

"IT COULD HAVE GONE SO MUCH WORSE."

I got really lucky.

the stratosphere. When a wing isn't inside a thermal, it descends. How fast it goes down is determined by its glide ratio, a measure of elevation loss to distance traveled. For paragliders, the ratio is typically 11 to 1, which means that if no other forces are acting on the wing, such as thermals or headwinds, it will fall 100 feet for every 1,100 feet of forward progress. If you're paragliding off a local hill and intend to land low, descending is not a concern, but it is in these mountains.

"Here, you do one glide for ten minutes and you end up on the dirt," Gadd says. "It's like a samurai sword fight. There is no retreat."

Thermals are usually indicated by the presence of cumulus clouds, which are created when moisture condenses as it hits the cool air at higher altitudes. The clouds materialize above dominant topographic features, specifically ridges and summits, often aligning themselves like cotton balls in a conga line.

"We call those cloud streets," McClurg

is visible for more than 15 minutes, he's up, pacing, talking to himself. He holds out his arms, palms forward. "Feel that? Feel that?" There's a faint breeze blowing upslope, and he's sure this indicates developing thermals. Gadd emerges from his tent just as McClurg announces, "Dude, this is looking better!"

Gadd says, "I look at this as less worse."

Gadd has auburn hair and a creamy complexion that seems incongruous with a guy who's outdoors every waking minute. He started paragliding in 1992, when the sport was young and embraced mainly by climbers using wings as a quick way to get themselves off a peak. Ten years later he smashed the distance world record, by means of what's known as a tow-launch flight, in which pilots are hoisted aloft with a winch and cable rig attached to the bed of a pickup truck. His flight—from Zapata, Texas, near the Mexican border, to Ozona—covered 263 miles and lasted 10 hours and 38 minutes, a mark that

MCCLURG CONCEIVED of the X-Rockies expedition long before Gadd got involved. "At first, Will wouldn't even consider it," McClurg says, mainly because the original plan required too much hiking. Gadd eventually signed on, but only after McClurg agreed to make some changes to the route and strategy, which included more flying and much less tromping. "I'm a pilot, not a backpacker," Gadd says.

McClurg, who is five-eight and ripped like a mountain gorilla, grew up in South Lake Tahoe, California, where his parents divorced when he was six. His father, Jack, took their boat; his mother, Jan, got the tent trailer.

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Gadd (left) and McClurg on Mount Aeneas, near the expedition's end

Clurg, who says that partnering up has given him “a psychological boost. It’s like, *Well, if he’s up here, I must not be totally crazy!* And you know he’s thinking the same thing.”

IT’S THE FOURTH day at our high camp, and the pilots are piling on layers—merino-wool long underwear, down jackets, gloves—to stay warm in the frigid air at higher altitudes. “During the expedition, 13,000 feet has been normal for us,” says McClurg, who drops his pants to install the final piece of gear—a strap-on catheter, so he can urinate in-flight.

By noon the thermals are cranking. Gadd and McClurg roll out their wings and launch. In only nine minutes, they climb 1,900 feet. I can barely see them, but I can hear their variometers. The device helps pilots find the so-called core of a thermal by repeatedly emitting audible chirps that scale higher during ascents (when they’re in the core) and lower during descents (when they’ve moved outside it). Four hours and 42 minutes later, they’ve landed in a meadow at 7,200 feet,

“We made two or three trips every summer in that trailer,” Jan told me. “Our big one was always to Yosemite.” A single mom, she couldn’t stray from camp because she was caring for McClurg’s sister, who is five years younger. “So I had to just let him go and trust that he’d be OK,” she says.

McClurg would often disappear from dawn until dusk to explore the park. Half Dome was his favorite place, and he first hiked it, with a buddy, when he was nine. “I decided a long time ago I can’t lose sleep and worry about him,” Jan says. When I ask McClurg about this, he agrees that he had plenty of freedom. “When I was 11, my mom would go on business trips for a week, and I was the babysitter for my sister. These days she’d be put in jail for doing that. But it taught me very early on what I was capable of, allowing me to believe that anything is possible. Now I tend to be overconfident, especially with flying.”

During the expedition, Belcourt and a few fellow pilots have been keeping tabs on its progress, and they’ve been relishing the idea of these starkly different personalities being together, in a sport where it can be distracting and even dangerous for two pilots to fly in close proximity. “We’re all wondering how Will is dealing with Gavin, joking about it,” Belcourt says. “This crazy optimist with Will.”

“You’re trying to realize your own potential in a place where no one sees and no one cares,” Belcourt has said of paragliders’ penchant for solitude. “There is a purity in that.” And yet there are situations—a longitudinal traverse of the Canadian Rockies, for instance—where

**“PARAGLIDING IS A SPORT THAT IS
LEAST DEFINED BY ITS NUMBERS,” GADD SAYS.
“IT’S THE FREEST SPORT I DO IN MY LIFE—
AND THE EXPRESSION OF THAT
is what Gavin and I did.”**

solo flying would be suicide.

“The biggest technical problem with paragliding is seeing the sky and understanding how it works,” Gadd explains. And unlike a typical flight, where pilots soar to wherever the thermals are working best, Gadd and McClurg want to adhere to a predetermined route that will lead to the U.S. border. This means that every second in the air requires a relentless search for clues that will help them navigate south.

“With two people, you have twice as much information about what’s going on in the atmosphere,” Gadd says. “We can sample a lot more air and up our odds.”

On our third night trapped in camp, Gadd fishes a bottle of cheap whiskey from his pack, takes a swig, and passes it to me. “What we’re flying through is without a doubt the deepest, most dangerous, and most sketchy terrain anyone has ever flown on a paraglider, so it just helps having someone out there with you,” he says. “There is a lot of stress involved flying in these gnarly conditions,” adds Mc-

having traveled 68 miles—their second-longest one-day gain on the expedition. (The longest: 94 miles.) In his journal, McClurg writes, “Best flight of my life. Most committing, beautiful, crazy, fun, wild, exceptional aviation experience I’ve ever had. Totally insane. Will reckons we went 50 miles with no landing options. Will and I feel at this point the rest of the expedition is just gravy, we’ve survived the hardest part.”

A short while later a cold front rolls in, grounding Gadd and McClurg for eight days. “The goal of the U.S. border became this imagined line that Will and I started to think was pointless,” says McClurg. They’re pinned down and despondent near the town of Invermere, 120 miles from Montana. Gadd asks himself, *Is this it? We’re done? We’re never going to get it going again?* Later he tells me, “I looked at the distance remaining and figured it’s not going to happen in the amount of summer we have left. The flying season ends in mid-August, when early fall starts.”

But finally they get a **continued on page 116**

A full-page background image showing a winding asphalt road on a grassy mountain slope. Several cyclists are riding along the road. In the distance, a small village is visible in a valley, and jagged mountain peaks rise against a blue sky with wispy clouds.

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#THEWORLDCALLS

THE SECRET LIFE OF

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SKIING, FISHING, RAFTING, AND CLIMBING** *get to work
in beautiful country.* **BUT THEY ALSO HAVE TO DEAL WITH
16-HOUR DAYS, DIRTY DIAPERS, BEACH SEX,
ROGUE CLIENTS, HANGOVERS, LOW PAY, BEAR ENCOUNTERS,
and love affairs THAT AREN'T ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA.
DON'T BELIEVE US? JUST ASK THEM.**

As told to Christopher Solomon
GUIDES

**PHOTOGRAPH BY
MARC HOM**

EVERYBODY STARTS AT THE BOTTOM

GARRETT MADISON, 36

OWNER OF MADISON MOUNTAINEERING; GUIDE ON THE SEVEN SUMMITS AND OTHER PEAKS

I was 20 when I was first hired at Rainier Mountaineering. Back then they held guide tryouts. There were maybe 90 of us, and we were all competing for the same ten jobs. We had to get up and tell everybody why we thought we should be hired, which was one of owner Peter Whittaker's tests. Another was the Death March, a one-mile, 1,500-vertical-foot run from Paradise up to Pan-

orama Point. They said, "It's important to finish near the front of the pack." They had one of their stronger guys lead us out of the parking lot and up the hill through the snow. He took off at 100 percent, and it was a struggle to keep up. Then we got to the half-way point: their strongest guy had hiked up earlier in the day and was waiting for us. He dropped everybody. I don't think the results

even mattered; it was just the Whittaker way. Once I was hired, I made \$60 per day, and sometimes it was a 24-hour day. We worked two to three weeks in a row leading two-day summits. We would take a group up, come back down, get the next group, and summit again. I once made five Rainier summits in a week. We called them yo-yos. We barely slept. I'm not sure I could do it now.

Adventure
issue 2015
GUIDING



Garrett
Madison

IT'S THE GUIDE'S JOB TO DEAL WITH THE SH-T

DOUG GRADY, 44
FORMER GUIDE IN THE
ANDES AND HIMALAYAS FOR
MOUNTAIN MADNESS

I was on a two-week trip guiding on Cayambe, the third-highest mountain in Ecuador. It's 19,000 feet. There was weather up high, a snowstorm, and we were getting battered. So we hunkered down on the lower glacier for a few days. When that happens, all you can do is sit, eat, talk, and shit.

A guide is always keeping an eye out for whether people are warm, dry, well fed and hydrated, and having fun. You also want to make sure they're going to the bathroom regularly.

I noticed that one woman—she was attractive and always really put together—wasn't. Well, this woman's tentmate came to me and said, "I don't know what's going on, but my tent smells like shit." Right then I knew something was wrong.

So I waited about an hour, to give the tentmate some plausible deniability, and then went to talk to her. I said, "Are you warm? Are you dry? Are you having normal bowel movements?"

"Yes," she said.



CAMP JOKES

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RAFT GUIDE AND SASQUATCH?

ONE'S HAIRY, SMELLY, AND LIVES IN THE WOODS,
AND THE OTHER IS A MYTH.

"Where have you been using the latrine?"

"Well, I've been taking care of it on my own."

I kind of paused and said, "What does that mean?"

She said, "I brought these Depend adult diapers so I could go in my pants and then take them off and put them in my backpack."

I don't know how long I paused before I said, "You have to stop taking shits in your own pants."

As you can imagine, it was a pretty foul scene in that tent. And, being the guide, I was the one who had to take care of the diapers.



THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS PRIVACY

ANGELISA ESPINOZA, 37

CYCLING GUIDE FOR
BACKROADS TRAVEL

The only way to deal with the craziness of guiding 24 hours a day is to shut off everything personal. When I'm on a trip, I don't talk to my family, I don't pay bills, I don't deal with anything that's not right in front of me. I'm taking care of people psy-

chologically and logistically. You spend every day with them. That's a lot of time, although it's also the greatest part about the job—the people are usually lovely. But you never get a break. Wherever I guide, there's a house for the staff. It's like *The Real World*: everybody has a shared living space. Your office is there, too, and those people are your social life, because you're there alone in Hawaii or Thailand or wherever.

When you're young, it's exciting. You don't have many expenses, and you get to travel to all the places you've always wanted to see. But when you've been guiding for a long time, you start praying for privacy and time off. Now I just want to be at home with my man. I don't really care if I go to New Zealand or Vietnam, because I've been there.



THE PERFECT PRANK REQUIRES PERFECT TIMING

CHRIS GLATTE, 46
FORMER RIVER GUIDE IN
OREGON AND IDAHO

On the last day of a Rogue River trip, in Oregon, we always stayed at Decision Rock, and we always

SURVEY SAYS

HOW MANY HOURS
A WEEK DO YOU
WORK DURING
PEAK SEASON?

UNDER 40	11%
40-60	25%
60-80	34%
80+	30%

→To get the inside story of life as an adventurer for hire, we sent an anonymous survey to 500 current and former guides, so they could speak candidly about their experiences. Some of their responses—and their go-to jokes for keeping spirits high on the trail—appear throughout.

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had bear trouble. So for years we would stack rocks nearby to throw at them. You'd hear other camps banging pots and pans, and you knew they were hosed. But the bears would never mess with us more than once, because of the rocks.

The summer of 1998 was my last season as a guide. Before we put in on my last trip, I went to a costume shop in Grants Pass and asked for a bear suit. They didn't have one, but they did have a gorilla. So I rented that and packed it in my drybag.

When we got down to Decision Rock, the clients all left to camp above the river. As we got ready for bed, I told the other guides, including my brother, Hayden, and his future wife, Margie, "Hey, the last time I was here there was a bear cub, and I don't want to hurt the cub, so I think we should bang pots and pans tonight instead of throwing rocks." So I got all these pots and pans and put them next

SURVEY SAYS
WHAT'S THE MOST
AND LEAST YOU'VE
MADE IN A SEASON?

MOST **\$120,000**
LEAST **I DON'T**
WANT TO TALK
ABOUT IT

to everyone's heads. Hayden said, "I'm not doing that. It doesn't work." So he stacked up a bunch of baseball-size rocks beside him.

We went to bed, and I set my alarm for two o'clock in the morning. When the alarm went off, I snuck away. I took several life jackets, and I strapped them on all over—around my shoulders, like a diaper, everywhere. Wearing all that with the

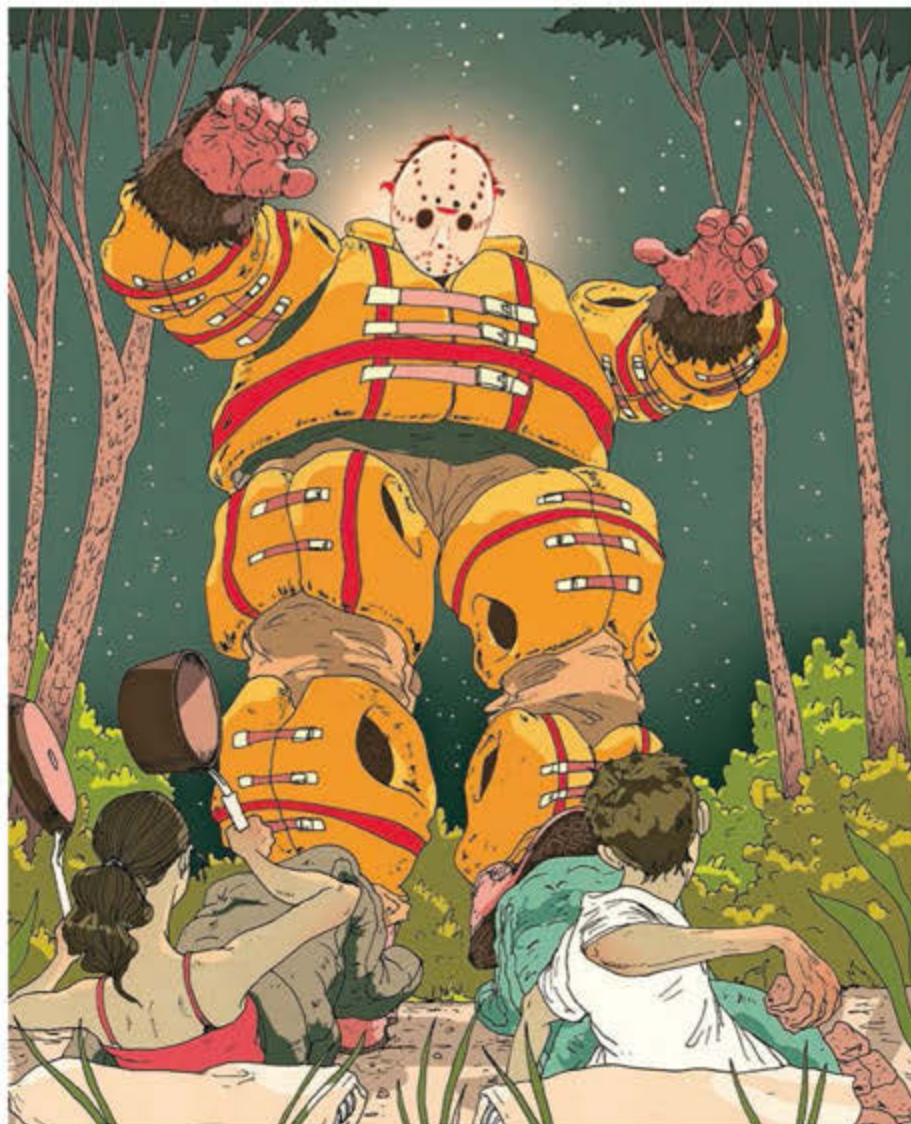
costume over it, I was huge.

I ambled down to the river on all fours, and I put my hands on the table and knocked stuff around. I was making all this noise: "Grrr, grrr." Margie woke up and elbowed my brother. "Hayden, it's a bear! He's right there!"

Hayden got up, pretty groggy, and tried to focus on what he was seeing. When he reached back and grabbed a rock, I stood up and started running at him as fast as I could. He was tangled up in his sleeping bag, and I jumped through the air at him, but he got his

CAMP JOKES

HOW MANY GUIDES DOES IT TAKE TO SCREW IN A LIGHTBULB?
GUIDES DON'T SCREW IN LIGHTBULBS, THEY SCREW IN DIRTY SLEEPING BAGS.



feet up in time. So instead of landing flat on top of him, I landed on his legs, and he started jackhammering me in the gut.

Meanwhile, I was swiping him in the face, trying to claw him with the rubber gorilla hands. He was screaming in terror. I looked over and saw Margie, who was beside me, with her pot in her hand, and she was banging the pot, trying to scare me while I was mauling Hayden. When I saw that, I lost it and started laughing so hard I rolled right off him.

At this point, all the guides were awake. My brother was hyperventilating. He told me later, "As I was kicking you, I was thinking, He's kind of soft for a bear."

A coda to the story:

After that, I circled a bunch of kids from New York City who were on the trip. They all woke up and stared—not making a move.

In the morning, one of the kids said, "There was a bear last night!" And soon all of them were telling stories about what they saw.

But one of the kids, Brian, wasn't saying much.

"Brian, did you see the bear?" I asked.

And another kid said, "Don't ask Brian. He thought it was a gorilla."



YOU CAN'T PREDICT WHAT WILL GO WRONG
PETER GRUBB, 57
OWNER OF ROW ADVENTURES

On one section of Idaho's Lower Salmon River, we do a lot of family trips. It's warm, intermediate whitewater with plenty of big beaches for camping. One year I was rowing

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CAMP JOKES

WHY ARE SKI GUIDES LIKE SURGEONS? BOTH BURY THEIR MISTAKES.

that stretch and I had a family in my boat—a mom, a dad, and a couple of kids, maybe 10 and 12 years old—and I saw something on the beach but couldn't make out what was going on. As we drifted, I said, "It looks like they're playing Twister."

As we got closer, the details came into view: There was a naked guy balanced on his hand. There was a large naked woman on top of him. And let's just say there was another guy involved, too. I turned my boat so that the family was facing the opposite shore, trying to edit their view. But it was no use.

When the three people saw us, they broke apart. But instead of hiding, the woman ran down to the water's edge. I was as far away from her as you can possibly get on the river and still be wet, but she kept yelling, "Come on over! Come on over!"

That particular section of river has a lot of interesting geology, so I started talking about basalt flows. We ignored her until she went back and resumed her activities with one of

the naked men. But the second naked guy, he got on an ATV and started doing donuts around the couple while they were going at it.

We still call that spot Twister Beach.



EVERYTHING IS THE GUIDE'S FAULT

CHRIS DOMBROWSKI, 39
FISHING GUIDE IN MONTANA;
AUTHOR OF *BODY OF WATER*

On my first day, I took this couple down the Big Hole in Montana. The husband had a fly-rod outfit, but the woman had nothing. I had only one combo, but I said, "You can borrow my rod and reel for the day." We fished through the morning and stopped to eat lunch on a high bank overlooking this nice run, so we could

see if fish were rising. We got back in the boat after lunch and pulled away from the bank, and I said, "OK, cast to this left bank near the grass." And the woman said, "Where's my rod?" And I said, "What do you mean?" And she said, "Well, I just leaned it against the boat at lunch." I started booking it upstream to see if the rod was still there, but of course it was gone, swept away in the river.

When I got back to the fly shop, I complained to my boss. He said, "If a guy falls in the river because he's drunk, it's your fault. If a woman gets lost in the woods while she takes a piss, it's your fault. And if someone loses your rod, it's your fault." In our business, there's a lot of truth in that.



A TRUE PROFESSIONAL WILL DO ANYTHING FOR THE CLIENT

JOHN RACE, 46
MOUNTAINEERING GUIDE IN ALASKA

SURVEY SAYS

HAVE YOU HAD TO
WORK MULTIPLE
JOBS TO SUPPORT
YOUR GUIDING
HABIT?

YES	92%
NO	8%

In 1992, I led my first trip on Denali. I was 23, and my assistant, Matt Belson, was 21. When we met our clients at the airport in Anchorage, you could tell they thought we'd be older. "Where are the guides?" they asked. "That would be us," I said.



“OUTSIDE MY COMFORT
IS MY ZONE”

— HUNTER MCINTYRE, BADASS SPARTAN



#WHYIRACE

EVERYONE HAS A STORY. WHAT'S YOURS?

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SPARTAN.COM

So I was eager to impress them. But when our driver showed up, she had a van that was too small for our group and all our gear. Behind her were two Jeep Cherokees driven by a couple of Germans. She explained that the larger vehicle she usually drove had caught fire earlier that day, when she had been driving the Germans to Anchorage to rent the Jeeps for a trip to the north side of Denali National Park. She convinced them to transport our group to Talkeetna, and in exchange, we'd cover some of the rental costs.

We climbed in and drove all the way through Anchorage in bumper-to-bumper

SURVEY SAYS

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SEDUCED BY A CLIENT?

YES **46%**
NO **54%**

HAVE YOU EVER SEDUCED A CLIENT?

YES **23%**
NO **77%**

in to shop and was collecting 12 pounds of butter when Matt ran up and told me that the Germans were leaving. All our gear was in those cars, so I ran outside and saw the Jeeps hit the main highway.

traffic before Belson remembered that we had forgotten to grab the dry food at the airport. We told the Germans that we had to turn around and drive all the way back. They were pissed, but they complied. We got the food and headed back out of town. Our usual arrangement was to then stop in Wasilla to pick up fresh food items. Nobody had mentioned this to the Germans, but again they complied. I went

I sprinted across the parking lot, across a ditch, and onto the road waving my arms. I locked eyes with the older German man driving the first Jeep. Instead of stopping, he accelerated. I jumped into the air just before he ran me over. I hit the windshield, rolled onto the top of the car, and grabbed the roof rack right before I went off the back. When the German slammed on the brakes, my group surrounded the car, dragged him out of his seat, and pushed him to the ground. Then I grabbed one of my clients, stuck him in the driver seat, put the old German in the back, and told the new driver to take the group to Talkeetna and make sure our gear was OK. Then I finished my shopping.



NOTHING BEATS A CLIENT WITH A GOOD ATTITUDE

CAMERON SCOTT, 37

FISHING GUIDE IN COLORADO AND OREGON

One day I picked up the clients of a retired guide in Basalt, Colorado. The trip had three generations of women in one family—a grandma, a mother, and a daughter. Another guide took the mother and daughter, who was maybe 13. And I had the grandma, who had fly-fished with us forever. She was one of those women who found fly-fishing in the 1970s and kept doing it even though it was a very male-dominated sport. Now that she was older, she'd gotten really severe dementia. But she retained that love.

It was a mid-August Colorado day in 2012, the monsoons had just quit, and it was sunny and warm. The green drakes were hatching in the afternoon. The water out of the dam was cold enough to hurt your hands.

CAMP JOKES

WHAT DO YOU CALL A GUIDE WITHOUT A GIRLFRIEND?

HOMELESS.



We were on the Fryingpan—a magnificent fly-fishing river—and there were four billion fish out there. The grandma would catch one, bring it in, get this huge grin, and comment on how beautiful it was. Then we'd let it go. And not 20 seconds after, she'd say, "Cam, when am I gonna catch a fish?" Just as if she hadn't caught one yet. She remembered how to cast. She remembered my name. She remembered the Fryingpan. And every time she caught a fish, she was mesmerized. But



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whatever it was about her dementia, she couldn't hold on to that moment. It was almost like the excitement was so pure, she couldn't get back to the present afterward.

This went on for about four hours. Finally, it was the end of the day, and she said, "Cam, I really had a great day. But I really wanted to catch a fish." And I was crushed. I wanted nothing more than to have her know that she caught a fish.

But the thing was, she had such pure excitement each time she caught one. Rarely are adults that excited. So often they catch a fish—even a big fish—and all they want to do is catch another one. But with her, I got to see the excitement of that first fish over and over again.



NEVER ASSUME THE CLIENT HAS A CLUE

SCOTT SCHELL, 42

FORMER MOUNTAINEERING GUIDE
WITH PRO GUIDING SERVICE

One guide I know had a Japanese client who was a novice skier. They met in the morning and went out, but the client was really suffering. The man spoke only Japanese, so the guide couldn't understand what the problem was. The client just kept pointing at his boots. Finally, the guide sat the man down in the snow to look at his feet. Now, this client was just a little guy, maybe five foot six. But the guide noticed he was wearing these massive ski boots—maybe size 14. "We've got to take these off," the guide said. "There's no way they should be hurting so bad." He unbuckled the boots and found the problem: inside, the guy was still wearing his leather dress shoes.



MAKING THE JOB YOUR LIFE MEANS MAKING COMPROMISES

DAVE HAHN, 53

MOUNTAINEERING GUIDE FOR RMI

I'm on the road eight months of the year, and that's good and bad. Buying a house was smart, in terms of establishing a base, but now I have something to miss. Before, what did I miss? My car? The toughest thing for me is packing up for Mount Everest in the spring and missing the end of ski-patrol season at Taos, New Mexico, which is the funnest time. I go to ten weeks of cold, nasty, mean Everest weather just as the flowers are pushing up and

SURVEY SAYS
HAS GUIDING BEEN
HARD ON YOUR
RELATIONSHIPS?

YES	70%
NO	30%

the birds are singing in my yard. It's different when you're prepping for a personal climbing goal, but I'm leaving to go to work, even though I'm excited once I get there. I'm not whining. It's just what happens when you turn something you love into a job.

Expedition guiding is something of a selfish pursuit. If you're pining for someone at home, you probably won't be a good guide. I feel like it's wrong to repeatedly leave someone behind to go on long expe-

ditions. You're putting them through hell. I think the only way it can work is if the person you're involved with is just as into doing their own thing while you're off doing yours. Personally, I've never had any grand scheme to avoid marriage and family. I figured I'd do it all when I grew up, but growing up has turned out to be time-consuming and tedious.

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR CHRISTOPHER SOLOMON WROTE ABOUT SKIING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA IN NOVEMBER.



CAMP JOKES

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD AND A MOUNTAIN GUIDE?

GOD DOESN'T THINK HE'S A MOUNTAIN GUIDE.

MUCH LIKE ITS LOCOMOTIVE
NAMESAKE, THIS IS A STRAIGHT SHOT
FROM THE MOTOR CITY.



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Buhring at
home near
Sorrento,
Italy

PHOTOGRAPHS
by Harry Borden

THE ROAD GOES ON *Forever*

AFTER SHE ESCAPED FROM THE CULT
IN WHICH SHE'D SPENT HER CHILDHOOD, and after her long-
distance love was **EATEN BY A CROCODILE**
IN THE CONGO, *bestselling author*
Juliana Buhring **WAS IN A DARK PLACE.**
SO SHE BOUGHT A BIKE AND PEDALED AROUND
THE WORLD, CLAIMING A SURPRISE GUINNESS RECORD
and finding a new calling, **ALONG THE WAY.**
by Grayson Schaffer

"YOU GROW UP IN A CULT," SAYS JULIANA BUHRING, *"and everybody thinks THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU."*

Buhring is not damaged—not emotionally, she wants me to know—from her childhood in the Family International, the controversial religious group that she described in her bestselling 2007 memoir, *Not Without My Sister*. Physically, however, she is a mess. Her knees are scabs over scabs, and her forearms carry the scars of not-so-old asphalt burns. The bike wreck that caused them occurred two weeks ago, while she was descending wet pavement around a hairpin corner on Mount Vesuvius. The Pompeii-burying volcano stands just across the Gulf of Naples from Sorrento, Italy, where Buhring has been running a small bed-and-breakfast for the past three years to pay for her cycling habit.

Buhring, 33, is tall, tan, and lean, with a big black fish eagle tattooed across her midriff; she says she has been hit by cars twice and merely “knocked over” half a dozen more times in the past four years, the first after she’d been cycling for only a month. “I could write a manual about how to fall off a bike,” she told me over dinner at the gastropub that adjoins B&B Juliana. Her second memoir, *Riding the Wind*, which will be released in the UK by Little, Brown next summer, details more than a few of these collisions.

The first time Buhring was hit by a car, in October of 2011, she was rounding a switchback in a mountainous area north of Naples called Benevento. An eight-wheeled box truck took the corner too sharply and tagged her back tire with its bumper. She went flying into a ditch.

“Fortunately, he pushed me to the right, onto the side of the road, and I did the big flip-and-tumble-tumble,” she says. Her helmet was smashed, her bike dinged up, and her wrist sprained. The truck sped away, but the driver behind him helped her to the hospital. At that point, Buhring was still riding a hybrid touring bike, wearing workout clothes, and using flat pedals. In other words, she was a rank beginner. But already she had some very big aspirations for how far and how fast her bike would take her—specifically, around the world in record time.

By any measure, Buhring succeeded. On July 23, 2012, she loaded her bicycle—this time a carbon-fiber race model she called Pegasus, donated to her just a week earlier

by a local bike shop—with a sleeping bag, a toothbrush, some cash, her German passport, and not much else, and she headed west. Buhring pedaled roughly 150 miles per day, up the shin of Italy, through Cannes, and down Spain’s Rio Ebro, which drains the southern Pyrenees.

When she reached Porto, Portugal, eight days after leaving home, Buhring and Pegasus caught a flight to Boston, where she continued across the U.S. It took her 28 days to traverse the northern plains and cross the Continental Divide near the Idaho-Utah-Wyoming border, reaching Seattle on August 31.

She crossed New Zealand and Australia in little more than a month; when a provincial border guard in the outback tried to confiscate her bag of oranges, a rare delicacy in those parts, she ate them all rather than turn any over. She powered through Malaysia and Thailand. To pass the time, she filled her head with books on tape. “*War and Peace* took me two weeks,” she says. “Then I discovered *Game of Thrones*.”

It wasn’t until Buhring hit India in October that she had any problems. Leaving Calcutta, she slammed into a pedestrian who was darting through heavy traffic, leaving Buhring with nowhere to swerve. They were both shaken but alright. Then, near Balasore, a city on the Bay of Bengal, she finally got sick. Her intestines churning, she ran clacking in her bike shoes to a hotel, where the desk clerk pointed toward a bathroom. It was too late. “I was 31 and shat myself like a baby,” says Buhring. There was a shower in the bathroom, which at least allowed her to rinse off. She exited with a quick thank you and found a place to sleep at a cheaper hotel down the road. It was the first day in three months that she was neither riding nor flying.

On December 22, 2012, Buhring arrived back in Naples. Guinness World Records certified her time of 152 days total, 144 of them on the bike. She had wanted to be the fastest woman to cycle around the world; instead she was the first, or as Guinness defines it, the first to do it alone, traveling continuously and in the same direction.

Since then, Buhring has established herself as an ascendant ultradistance rider, having entered two self-supported cross-continent



Buhring training
on the roads
around Sorrento

races—the Transcontinental, from London to Istanbul, and last year’s inaugural TransAmerica, from Oregon to Virginia—and finished both among the top male competitors. She is one of the primary subjects of a new documentary about the TransAmerica, *Inspired to Ride*, which premiered in April in Denver.

Last November, I joined Buhring in Sorrento to ride for a few days, but it was rainy when I arrived, so we ducked into the gastropub, surrounded by an oil-producing olive grove strung with nets to catch the fruit. The cycling along the Amalfi Coast might be world-class, but the food—Neapolitan pizza, cured ham, raw mozzarella, and a range of olive oils—exists in a heightened realm and apparently can’t be reproduced in the U.S. at any cost. As we ate and drank, we recalled the unlikely set of circumstances that led to her becoming a cyclist.



"I didn't become a cyclist," she said, correcting me. "I decided to ride my bike around the world."

THE NEXT MORNING the weather had cleared, and I clipped into my road-bike pedals for the first time in several months and followed Buhring on one of her training rides. She doesn't set detailed itineraries so much as general vectors. On her global journey, she says, "I'd make a list of towns that I needed to go through, but mostly I'd follow the sun." That was the idea for the next three days. "I've decided we're gonna do what I do best," she said. "Get lost."

Back in May 2011, when Buhring first told me her plan to ride around the world, I was skeptical. She had never ridden before. "Call it a matter of pride or stubbornness," she e-mailed me then. "A trait both helpful and

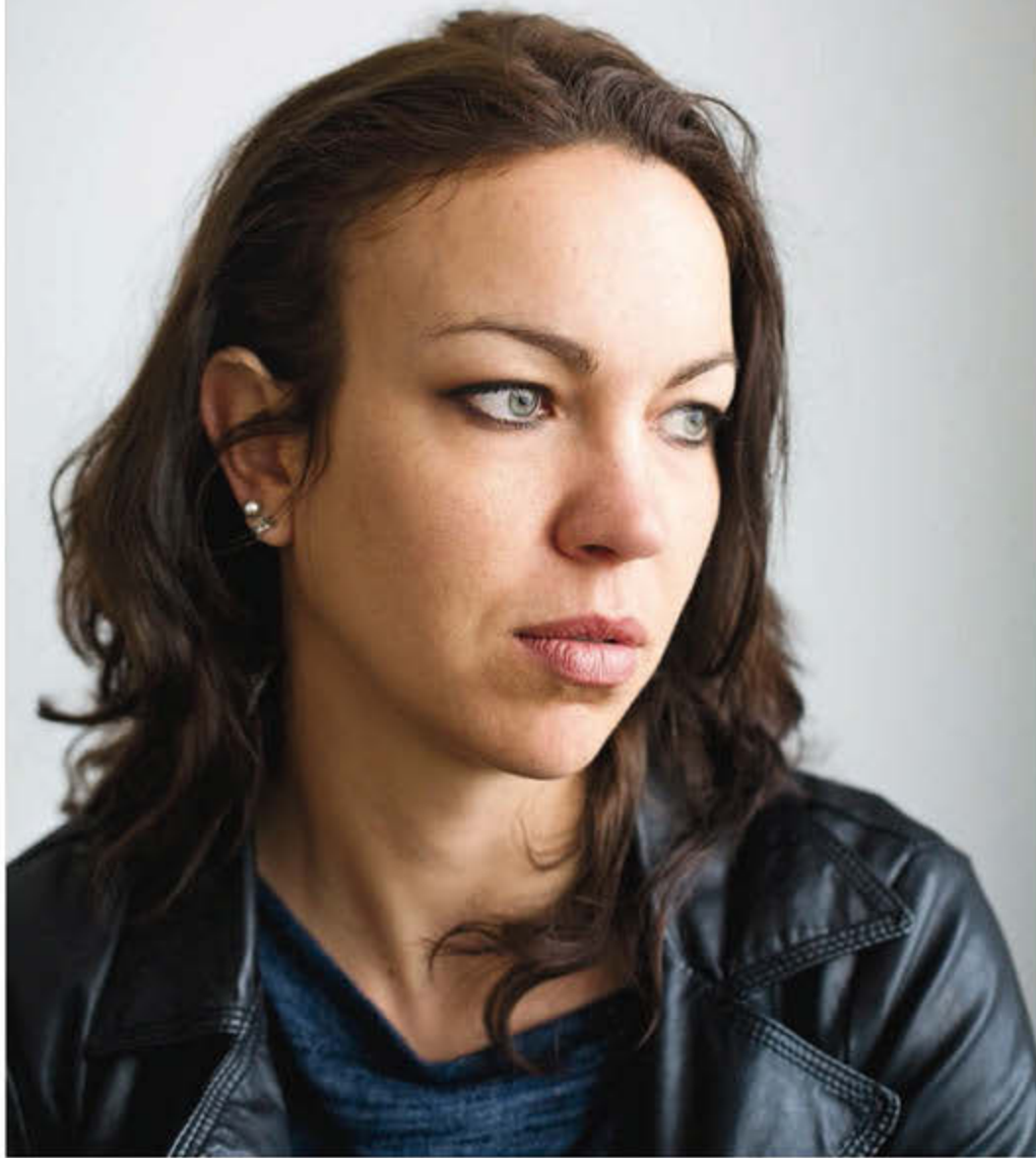
harmful as the case may be. I am dead set on doing this."

We had spent many hours on the phone over the previous months, when I was reporting a story on the late South African whitewater kayaker Hendrik Coetzee. Buhring had been in an on-again, off-again long-distance relationship with Coetzee for eight years when he was killed and eaten by a

crocodile while descending the Lukuga River in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2010. (That story, "Consumed," appeared in the March 2011 issue of *Outside*.) Buhring and Coetzee had met at the Rock Garden night club in Kampala, Uganda, in 2002, where Buhring also worked as a dancer. At the time, she was still a member of the Family International, though she was

**THIS PART OF ITALY IS AN AMERICAN
CYCLIST'S DREAM. THE ROADS ARE PAVED AND
SPIDER IN ALL DIRECTIONS, OVER MOUNTAINS,
ALONG FLAT COASTLINES, AND THROUGH PARKS**

full of Roman ruins.



de Beauvoir's partner, Jean-Paul Sartre, got credit for her ideas.)

Buhring and Coetzee talked a lot about 19th-century explorer couples like Samuel and Florence Baker and David Livingstone and Mary Moffat—Livingstone's wife, who accompanied the explorer on two expeditions across the Kalahari Desert. "She mellowed him out," Buhring says of Moffat. Whether Buhring would have mellowed Coetzee out is anybody's guess. In a romance built on e-mail messages and webcam calls, she never had a chance to find out.

"It's this bitter irony," Buhring says. "I would have never discovered this talent for biking if he hadn't died. But I'd give it all back to see him alive."

It was at Coetzee's service that Buhring met a British expat named Naomi Swain, who mentioned the idea of riding bikes across Canada together. Buhring thought it sounded interesting, but her immediate reaction was, Why ride across a boring country like Canada, and why stop there? The plan fell apart—Swain ended up teaching yoga to refugees in South Sudan—but Buhring began researching around-the-world routes, Googling the waypoints that other women had used. As it turned out, there weren't any. According to Guinness, no woman had ever circumnavigated the globe on a bike. That's mostly because attempting it can be dangerous for a woman traveling solo. Buhring didn't care.

She wasn't really thinking straight, she says, and she needed

a way to channel her grief. "If I'm going to die, it's not going to be on a bike," she says now. "I'd like to die on a bike, and I never get what I want?"

She joined a Facebook group of men who

plotting her escape. When she fled to the UK in 2006, she and Coetzee lost touch, but they reconnected in 2009 via Skype. She had a one-way ticket to visit him for New Year's 2011. They were finally going to give their relationship a go. Instead, she used the ticket to attend his memorial.

Coetzee was a towering figure in white-water exploration, a restless soul who led complex expeditions down the Nile and soloed its most difficult stretches. He and Buhring bonded over their mutual inability to follow the rules and over literature, the kind of popular philosophy—Viktor Frankl, Paulo

Coelho—that resonates with many who feel adrift in the world. (In a bed-and-breakfast in Agropoli a few days after I arrived, Buhring read aloud Simone de Beauvoir's entire Wikipedia page while interjecting all the ways that

**"I GET BORED IF I'M ANYWHERE TOO LONG,"
BUHRING SAYS. "I ALWAYS HAVE THIS
FEELING OF URGENCY, LIKE TIME IS NOT
ON MY SIDE. I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE
I need to catch up."**



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were planning a self-supported, around-the-world competition, the inaugural World Cycle Race, in 2012. She wasn't so much interested in competing in the event—a tiny, unsanctioned affair on the fringes of endurance sports—as she was in learning how to ride that far on her own. The organizer was Mike Hall, a 33-year-old British aerospace engineer at Rolls Royce who would go on to win the race in 91 days of actual riding, obliterating the official men's around-the-world record of 106 days. Hall gave Buhring tips on bike maintenance, which bike bags to use—

light, waterproof Revelates—and how to pack them. Hall's most important advice, he told me, was about “not needing to ride fast, just needing to not stop.”

Hall, like many competitors in these types of events, is independent, capable of enduring great suffering, and fiercely committed to his cause. “I grew up with a harelip and quite a few operations and plastic surgery on my face,” he says. “As a child, I was introverted—maybe a bit of a loner. So I was good at riding my bike alone for long distances.”

That's a familiar theme among ultradis-

tance cyclists. Many have something inside that allows them to ride for months alone with their thoughts, or that makes solitude preferable. Buhring, who spent her childhood trying to escape from the people closest to her, fit right in.

“It's like I quit one cult,” she says, “and joined another.”

BUHRING SPENT the first 23 years of her life in the Family. She was born in Greece in 1981 to a German woman who went by the name Serene Buhring and a Brit called Christopher Jones, who served as the radio voice of the Family's taped and disseminated messages. She has 17 brothers and sisters by her father. To figure out how many siblings she has by marriage—the brothers and sisters of her brothers and sisters—would require a small census bureau.

At its peak, in the late nineties, the Family counted almost 14,000 members. Originally known as the Children of God, it was founded in Huntington Beach, California, in the 1960s

BUHRING FINISHED ONLY THREE DAYS
BEHIND THE TRANSAMERICA WINNER,
TIED FOR FOURTH. SHE RODE THE
LAST 36 HOURS WITHOUT SLEEP, COVERING

500 miles in a single push.

by the controversial evangelist David Berg, a self-styled prophet who preached a mix of Biblical scripture and free love.

Not Without My Sister was the first memoir by second-generation members of the Family, and it painted an ugly picture. Written by Buhring and two of her half-siblings, Celeste and Kristina Jones, the book—told in three parts, each by one sister—topped the British bestseller list for five weeks in 2007, sold 200,000 copies in the UK, and was translated into 11 languages.

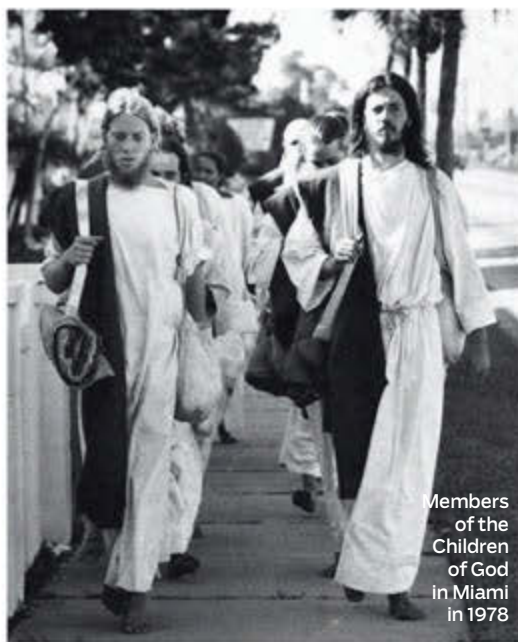
“Adultery, incest, extramarital and adult-child sex were no longer sins, as long as they were done ‘in love,’” wrote Celeste, who is six years older than Juliana. One of the Family’s more infamous practices was known as “flirty fishing,” in which women were encouraged to use their bodies to recruit new members. Children, the sisters recall, were groomed by having sex with each other (in what were called “date naps”) as young as four or five, then farmed out to the group’s adults.

In 2010, three years after the book was released, the Family effectively disbanded, its leaders issuing public declarations that nullified its former beliefs. The organization had already acknowledged in a statement about *Not Without My Sister* that the women’s story was plausible. “The Family has a zero tolerance policy in regards to the abuse of minors,” it read in part. “We regret that prior to the adoption of this policy, cases occurred where minors were exposed to sexually inappropriate behavior between 1978 and 1986.”

Buhring was born in 1981. When she was three, her mother was sent home to Germany after developing a rare type of arthritis. Buhring was fostered out to a series of caretakers, in keeping with Family tradition. Mostly she remained close to Celeste as their branch of the Family moved around the world, proselytizing in more than 30 countries. The girls rarely saw their father. They were kept in line, they wrote, both physically—with corporal punishment—and psychologically. They were told that the world would end in 1993 and that only the Family would be saved. “A lot of us would say that it wasn’t actually the sexual-abuse part that was the most damaging,” says Celeste, now a child therapist in the UK. “It was the emotional abuse and the mind bending that was the longest lasting.”

Buhring found it especially difficult. When she was 12, the sisters say, they were confined to a locked room for more than a month to keep out of view of child-welfare authorities seeking Celeste on behalf of her mother, who had left the cult. But when Buhring hit 13—shortly after the apocalypse failed to materialize—she matured quickly, shooting up to five foot eleven. She was branded a rebel

AFTER SPENDING HER CHILDHOOD TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM THE PEOPLE CLOSEST TO HER, BUHRING FIT RIGHT IN AS AN ENDURANCE CYCLIST. “IT’S LIKE I QUIT ONE CULT,” she says, “and joined another.”



she says, “and go somewhere I was unknown.”

For Buhring, the whole ordeal has come with the unexpected drawbacks of personal notoriety. Though she’s written a bestseller, founded a charity, and become a champion athlete, all by the age of 33, many people still see her—in what amounts to victim blaming—as the woman with the sordid past. She thinks this has scared away sponsors and led to workplace gossip when she tried to hold down a normal job in geriatric care in the UK.

Buhring is still in touch with her mother, who lives in Vietnam. And amazingly, she and her sisters occasionally see their father, who still lives in Uganda and works as a TV and radio producer. (He chose not to comment for this story.) Last December, Buhring says, he turned up at the

Christmas gathering she held in Sorrento with many of her siblings. It’s a lot to process.

NOT LONG AFTER Buhring returned from her around-the-world ride, Hall told her about another race he was planning, in the spring of 2013, called the Transcontinental—this one an inaugural sprint from London to Istanbul. Thirty-one riders made the unsupported, 2,050-mile trip across Europe, each choosing their own route but crossing the Alps at 9,042-foot Stelvio Pass, in northern Italy. Buhring was the only woman. She finished ninth, averaging just under 177 miles per day for 12 days.

Then, last June, both Hall and Buhring raced the first TransAmerica, an unsanctioned, 4,233-mile gruntfest from Astoria, Oregon, down the Rockies, then east to Yorktown, Virginia. The course follows America’s most popular cross-country-touring route. There is no entry fee and no prize money.

Unlike the better-known, 33-year-old Race Across America (RAAM), in which competitors have vans of support crews, the TransAmerica and other upstart bikepacking races like the Tour Divide **continued on page 116**

CRUX TIME

LAST YEAR, AFTER 16 SHERPAS DIED IN AN AVALANCHE ON EVEREST, MANY PREDICTED AN END TO COMMERCIAL CLIMBING ON THE MOUNTAIN. THEY WERE WRONG. BUT AS CLIMBERS CONVERGE ON BASE CAMP THIS APRIL, THESE FIVE QUESTIONS ARE SURE TO GENERATE CONTROVERSY. BY ANNA CALLAGHAN AND MOLLY LOOMIS

1. IS THERE A SAFE WAY THROUGH THE ICEFALL?

For the first 28 years of Everest exploration, starting in 1922, the Nepalese side of the mountain was off-limits; climbers launched their attempts from the Tibetan side. Once the Nepalese government opened the mountain to climbers, teams were stymied by the Khumbu Icefall, a treacherous corridor filled with huge, constantly shifting ice blocks, crevasses that appear without warning, collapsing seracs, and frequent avalanches. In 1952, a Swiss team pio-

neered a route through, and a year later, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay used it to reach the summit. The Icefall has been part of the standard route ever since, though it remains a dangerous zone: 34 Sherpas and five Westerners have died there since 1963. Each April, a group of eight Nepalis called the Icefall Doctors select the safest passage, an increasingly perilous job as climate change renders it ever more unstable. "There are no pros to these routes; they're all cons," says veteran guide Peter Athans. "Some just have fewer cons than others."

LEFT ROUTE

The most direct path to Camp I and the one used last year, it once had a distinct advantage: a massive bergschrund—a gap between a glacier and a mountain—collected falling debris off the west shoulder, preventing it from reaching climbers. But the void has steadily filled with snow and ice, diminishing the buffer. Still, if the Icefall Doctors can't find a way through the middle of the valley, they'll likely opt for the left side.

FOOTBALL FIELD

An anomaly on the Icefall: a relatively flat area at approximately 19,000 feet. "The question really comes down to where you go once you're at the football field," says guide David Morton.

KHUMBU ICEFALL DISASTERS

1970 SERAC COLLAPSE
Six Sherpa deaths

1982 SERAC COLLAPSE
Three Sherpa deaths

2006 SERAC COLLAPSE
Three Sherpa deaths

2014 AVALANCHE
Sixteen Sherpa deaths

EVEREST
SUMMIT

WEST
SHOULDER

CAMP I

BASE CAMP

MIDDLE ROUTE (LOWER SECTION)

The fastest-moving part of the glacier, this area is extremely unstable. "It's becoming river-like," says Morton. The Icefall Doctors will likely avoid it yet again this season.

2. IS ALPINISM ON EVEREST DEAD?

WITH PAYING CLIENTS CLOGGING THE SUMMIT QUEUE, SERIOUS CLIMBERS FACE A NARROWING WINDOW FOR THEIR BOLD ASCENTS—AND DESCENTS

KILIAN JORNET, 27

The Spanish ultrarunner has already made speed ascents of Denali and Aconcagua. This spring he'll try Everest—without oxygen. He's aiming to make the summit in under 20 hours.



WILLIE BENEGAS, 46, AND MATT MONIZ, 18

After last year's avalanche, the two shelved their plans to try the first full ski descent of the Lhotse Face. They'll return this year to make another attempt.



RAPHAEL SLAWINSKI, 48

The Scarpa athlete has hopes of tackling a new route up the mountain's northeast face, which has been successfully climbed only once, by a Russian team in 1996.



MIDDLE ROUTE (UPPER SECTION)

To get between the towering 100-foot seracs—or to cross the area's multiple crevasses—the Icefall Doctors link as many as eight ladders to bridge gaps. In 2014, they spent four unsuccessful days searching the area for a good route. (It was last used in 2001.) This year they hope to find one with the help of radar devices that can be mounted to a helicopter or dolly to create a moving map of the shifting terrain.

RIGHT ROUTE

The Icefall Doctors examine conditions here each year, but it's rarely considered a viable option because it's so open to the seracs that frequently fall from above. Otherwise, it's similar to—but longer than—the upper middle route.



4. WILL VETERAN SHERPAS REFUSE TO CLIMB?

Outfitters have had no problem hiring Sherpas. (The job pays ten times the average annual salary in Nepal.) But those with experience and clout—including the sirdars for Adventure Consultants and Alpine Ascents—are opting to manage Base Camp, join expeditions on the north side, or stay home. Why? To avoid the Icefall. "Something happened inside me when I dealt with the dead bodies after the 2014 avalanche," says **Lakpa Rita**, Alpine's longtime sirdar. "Every time I go back, I remember all the moments that I don't want to remember."

5. SHOULD HELICOPTERS FERRY GEAR TO CAMP I?

One way to reduce the risk that Sherpas face in the Icefall: airlift equipment to Camp I instead of having them carry it. Russell Brice, owner of Himalayan Experience, has advocated this approach since 2013, but the Nepalese government has yet to grant permission. Meanwhile, some guides, including 15-time summiter Dave Hahn, oppose heli-assisted ascents on principle; others worry that a helicopter crash on a crowded mountain could be disastrous. Does the benefit to Sherpas negate these concerns? We calculated the cost of transporting 9,000 pounds of gear—enough for 12 clients—using each method.

BY SHERPA
220 ICEFALL TRIPS **\$7,150***

BY HELICOPTER
21 TRIPS **\$42,000**

**Cost assumes 20 Sherpas, each making 11 trips and earning approximately \$32.50 per trip.*

3. IS THE NORTH SIDE SAFER?

After last year's avalanche, some predicted a migration to the Icefall-free northern side, but only one Western team made the switch: Alpenglow Expeditions, led by **Adrian Ballinger**. Those who stayed claim that the ability to use helicopters for rescues and the proximity to hospitals outweigh the dangers. But Ballinger stands by his decision.

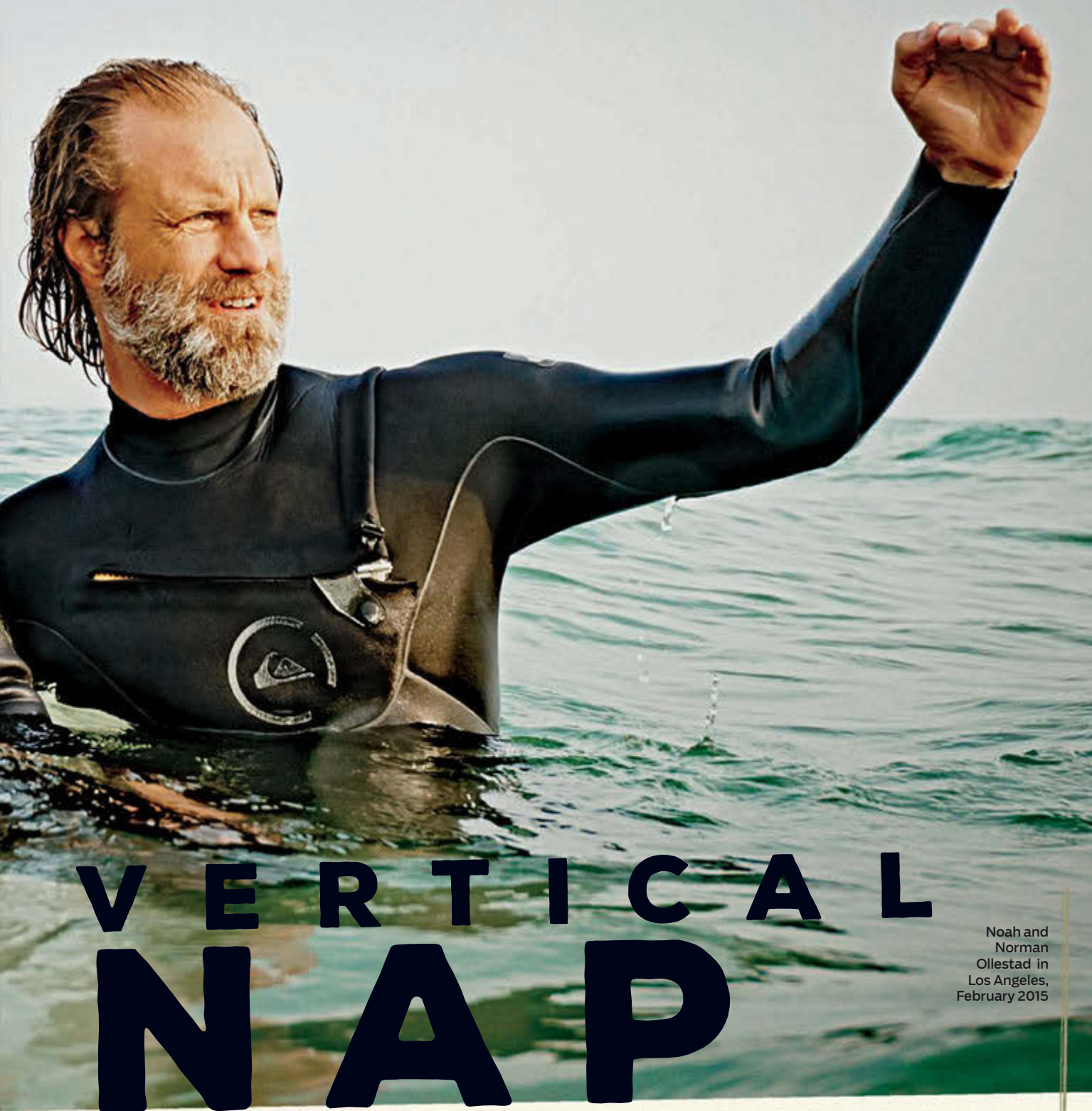


"The things that go wrong on the north side are running out of oxygen or sitting down from exhaustion," he says. "Sherpas don't do that. They die in crevasses or avalanches." The north is more difficult, but Ballinger hopes to temper that by keeping his client count low (six climbers) and his staff-to-client ratio high, and bringing a full-time doctor. It's an expensive endeavor—Ballinger is charging \$79,000, compared with roughly \$50,000 for a south-side climb—but he thinks it's necessary. "The future of Everest needs to be on the north side," he says. "It's the only ethical way of running this business."

PHOTOGRAPHS
by Jeff Lipsky



NORMAN OLLESTAD'S FATHER TAUGHT HIM TO SURF
Mexico. **THEN THE EDUCATION CAME TO A**
HEADS SOUTH WITH HIS OWN SON— *and finds that the*



Noah and
Norman
Ollestad in
Los Angeles,
February 2015

VERTICAL NAP

DURING RAMBLING, TOUGH-LOVE SAFARIS *down the coast of*
SUDDEN AND TRAGIC END. FORTY YEARS LATER, *Ollestad*
old road maps **CAN ONLY TAKE THEM SO FAR.**

by Norman Ollestad

MY SON AND I TUCKED OUR SURFBOARDS *under our arms and jumped off* THE LAST WOODEN BEACH STAIR.

It was the first morning of our trip to a secluded point break in Mexico, a country I'd been surfing all my life, starting with the road trips my father took me on in the 1970s when I was a boy. We'd leave our home in Malibu and head south, driving for several days, crossing the Gulf of California on the ferry, and surfing all the good spots down to Puerto Vallarta, where my grandparents lived. Carrying on the tradition with my son, Noah, was important. When I was 11, my father and I were in an airplane crash, and he'd been killed. These trips with Noah, now 14, kept us connected to my father's adventurous spirit.

My favorite spots as a kid—Sayulita and Punta Mita, close to my grandparents' house—were now overcrowded, but a couple of years ago I'd lucked upon a long left point break in the mouth of the Gulf of California about 300 miles north of Sayulita. After two summers of surfing the point for a week with Noah, staying in the one small hotel with just a few friends and no one else, we couldn't wait to go back.

The morning sun loomed behind the jungle mountains, and a single ray splintered through a notch, leaving us in shadow trotting along the horseshoe-shaped cove toward the point. Noah started whistling a song he'd just learned on his ukulele, "Sunshine of Your Love," jutting his chin to the hard notes, rolling his shoulders and thrusting his pelvis to the beat. His loony sense of humor reminded me of a moment I'd had with my father in the surf somewhere south of here: I'd gotten my first deep tube ride, and emerging from the cavern drunk on adrenaline, I lost control of my body and flopped into the water; when I surfaced, Dad and I started laughing, and that's when I finally understood why he got so wild-eyed about surfing and pushed me so hard—something I resented as a boy.

Noah and I stopped and watched the swells as they bent around the rocky point. As if on cue, each wave folded from the top of the point down into the heart of the cove, never overrunning the open face—a surfer's canvas. There remained very few places on earth that offered shapely yet unpunishing waves like these without thirty or forty guys vying for them. This one was all ours.

The day before, while we were packing our boards, Noah declared, "This year I want to put a lock on my vertical snaps." Translation: I want to master going straight up the face of

the wave at its most vertical point, hitting the pitching lip, and snapping the board around in a tight arc.

I was surprised by the hard, steely glare in his eye. I'd never seen him so determined; it contradicted the passive kid who would give up a great wave coming right to him if another surfer wanted it—and would then moan, "I never get the good ones"—and who wanted to prove to the bullies that he wasn't just a "pussy midget," but still screamed in a high pitch whenever a big wave approached. The last time he was half this excited was when he'd told me that he loved skateboarding and I'd bought him a board for his birthday. But he mostly just sat on the sideline, watching his buddies practice, and when they advanced to riding a halfpipe, Noah was too scared to drop in and then decided to quit because "they're so much better than me now." What seemed to be missing most was his passion. His tentative personality made him an easy target for teasing, which meant that he needed that elusive fire a little more than most kids.

So when he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "I want to take my surfing to another level on this trip," I saw an opportunity—and was already concocting a plan. This was the

He dropped the tail of his four-foot, ten-inch surfboard into the sand, staking it upright, and wrapped an arm around the nose like it was his teddy bear. It was the first tear in the immaculate picture of my son getting the rides of his life.

"The mosquitoes aren't bad for July," I said to deemphasize the swells.

He ignored me and scowled at the ocean.

"In the old days," I said, casually stretching my neck, "when I'd come through here with my dad on our way down to Puerto Vallarta, we had no—"

"No air-conditioning," Noah interrupted, his eyes never leaving the surf. His well-built shoulders—the only physical sign that he'd just turned 14 and was entering puberty—sloped to one side, mouth wrinkling with something sour. "I'm kinda scared," he said.

My shoulder blades pinched together. What happened to the impetus behind "I want to put a lock on my vertical snaps"? Now I'd have to persuade him to take a leap over some wholly manufactured unease and convince him that it would turn out to be fun and rewarding. How could we still be having the same battle we had when he was five years old and I tried to get him to ride the white-wash a few feet from the shore?

ANOTHER BLUE GEM PEELED PAST US.
IT WAS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THE TREASURE
I WAS SALIVATING OVER MIGHT LOOK
INTIMIDATING TO NOAH, AND I FLASHED TO MY
FATHER STANDING ON A BEACH IN MEXICO, LIKE I WAS NOW,
watching his son struggle with fear.

year Noah would blossom in the surf, and he'd start his freshman year of high school with a well of newfound confidence that would fuel his journey through adolescence. Even the offshore breeze, pungent with fruit trees, mangroves, and saltwater mist, seemed to foretell sweet success.

I had it all figured out.

"THE WAVES LOOK big," Noah said, his neon blond hair lighting up in the rising sun.

Under a surge of adrenaline brought on by the surf, I strained to remain calm. "It looks perfect for you."

Another blue gem peeled past us. It was hard to believe that the treasure I was salivating over might look intimidating to Noah, and I flashed to my father standing on a beach in Mexico, like I was now, watching his son struggle with fear.

IT WAS THE SUMMER before my deep tube. I was nine, standing around a small fire we'd built one morning with Grandpa in the sand at Sayulita, having gathered rocks from the edge of the seasonal river that emptied into the ocean, cooking corn on the cob because the town's one restaurant was closed.

Adventure
issue 2015
SURFING

Noah
Ollestad



L.A.'s Will
Rogers Beach



"Do we have to go back to Punta Mita?" I asked my father.

"The waves are better over there."

"Why can't we just surf here?" I argued.

"You've surfed Sayulita a hundred times, Ollestad. Let's get you into something that has some speed and power."

"But I like these waves."

He glanced at the ocean, and his shoulder blades pinched together. "I don't want to waste a golden opportunity," he said. "*Vamos.*"

I ate my corn and shooed mosquitoes in the backseat of Grandpa's orange VW jeep, called a Thing, and we crossed a stream and climbed a steep hill, and the tires spit out dirt behind us. I hated always having to surf or ski where Dad wanted instead of where I wanted. We always had to do things his way, even if I was scared, and I didn't care about "golden moments" like he did. It made me want to quit surfing altogether.

Punta Mita was littered with white shells,

and I was terrified of the jagged reef where the waves broke. "I don't want to surf," I protested, but my father picked me up and plopped me down on my surfboard, pushing me ahead of him across the shallows.

"These waves are no sweat, Ollestad. Just bend your knees on the drop," he said, as if it was that simple.

I scoffed with anger, tears in my eyes, determined to find some way out of this.

The surf was only three or four feet, but

when I dropped into my first wave the trough was sucking off the reef so hard that I was thrown onto my back foot and my board got pulled up the face and over the lip, flinging me into the air.

If I hadn't landed on the back side of the wave, I would have hit the coral, and now I was really pissed at Dad. But I paddled for the next wave so that he wouldn't pester me about giving up. I missed it, though, and that gave me a good idea: look like you really want it, but never quite catch one. That'll show him.

A bigger wave rose up behind mine, and my father dropped in. He crouched into a ball and disappeared under the throwing lip. On his way back out he wore a delirious grin.

"Go for this one," he said, gesturing to an incoming peak.

I oared for it, bending at the elbow to weaken my stroke, and as the wave began to slip under my board, something bumped the tail and then my father was shoving me into the wave. I had to jump to my feet or get pitched over the falls into the coral, and this time I absorbed the powerful trough with bent knees. Then the board was sucking up the face, and out of instinct I rotated my shoulders the other way, tilted the board onto the downside rail, and extended my legs, making an arc under the pitching lip.

"Nice turn," my father said when I made it back out.

I was torn between anger and excitement, but I had to know: "Was there a lot of spray?"

He laughed. "Should we go back to Sayulita now?"

"No, I'm all right," I said with a tinge of resentment, because I wanted to make another radical turn, and that meant he'd gotten his way again.

I HEARD NOAH. "What are you doing?"

He was watching me stand in anguished contemplation, just like I'd seen my father do, and now when I looked up at Noah I knew what he was feeling—he wished he wasn't afraid, that he was as gung-ho as his dad, and the disconnect made the fear even more aggravating, twisting him around into a tailspin.

At the same time, I was seeing Noah from my father's point of view—it's a golden moment for my son, so we'll take it; the fear is a minor detail.

"Just thinking," I responded.

Although I appreciated that he was comfortable enough to express his fear to me—as opposed to my apprehension with my father—it did not, in that moment, prompt any new insights as to what course of action I should take.

Then I heard my father's assured voice in my head: Hustle him up the beach to the easy

paddle-out spot. Don't let him sweat it. After his first good ride, his fear will be a distant memory.

But it was countered by: Or he'll kick and scream like he did last year, and we'll begin the trip with him in tears, vowing never to surf with me again.

Holding two or more opposing ideas in your mind at the same time and still retaining the ability to function—that's parenthood, I thought, paraphrasing F. Scott Fitzgerald, and then stepped toward the point.

"Where are you going?" called Noah.

"To the easy paddle-out spot where there's no current."

"I'm just going to paddle from here...."

When I rode my first wave my hair was still dry. It was a hundred-yard zipper that offered three juicy lip-bashing sections. Twenty or so minutes later, Noah finally made it out beyond the rows of whitewash, but the current had swept him too far down the beach, to where the waves were crumbly and ill formed—not what we'd come all this way for. Bedraggled, arms hanging into the water, one side of his face slumped against his board, he was spent before he'd ridden his first wave.

Maybe I should have dragged his ass out with me? I heard a voice say.

I loved riding waves through the corridor, and I could only bring my board when Grandpa drove me. But now that I had a burro, I could bring my board on my own. After a couple of hours swimming, I untied the burro and walked it over to the embankment made by the cobblestone road climbing up the hill. From the embankment, I leaped onto the burro's back—something I'd learned to do back home in California, riding my friend's horse in the Rodeo Grounds next to where I lived on Topanga Beach.

The burro became my transportation, and Grandpa let me keep him in an empty lean-to near the house. For three days I had it made, riding each morning to Rock Beach, then going to town for ice cream and scaring up a game of tag with the local boys in the town square. Then one afternoon, as I was returning from Rock Beach, a burly guy in a truck pulled onto the shoulder of the highway where I was riding the burro. He yelled at me and pointed to the burros standing in the back of his truck, and I saw the brand, two letters on top of each other, burned into the animals' haunches. It was the same brand as the one on mine. I kicked one leg over and slipped down, clutching my surfboard, landing barefoot on the dirt. He yelled at me some more and took the burro to the back of



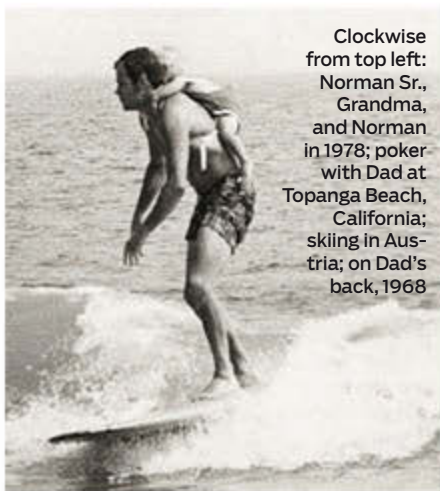
AFTER OUR DAY at Punta Mita, my father had gone home, leaving me with Grandma and Grandpa Ollestad. I wandered freely to the beach, to town, wherever I wished, and I missed my father, but it wasn't so bad, because I didn't have to surf unless I wanted to.

My favorite local *playa* was what Grandpa called Rock Beach, maybe a two- or three-mile walk under the tropical sun, and one day on my way there I found a burro. A rope was craftily harnessed around its neck, head, and jaw, and I led it down the cobblestone road that connected the beach to the highway. I tied the burro to a tree and swam around a cluster of rock slabs that stretched out to sea; a narrow opening ran down the center of the slabs, and when a wave came in it washed you through the corridor between the rocks and flushed you out the other end near the beach.

his truck, where he pulled out some wood and the burro slipped and bucked its way up into the back with the others. I watched the burro drive away and cried during the entire walk along the shoulder of the highway to my grandparents' house.

YOU SHOULD HAVE dragged his ass out two days ago. You blew it.

For the second day in a row, a tropical storm to the south had turned the conditions sloppy. "Did you see that carve, Dad? ... How was that floater? ... Did I get vertical on that one?" Noah had asked after each ride and then questioned me again back at our room. The waves were too weak to get much out of them, yet his need for validation forced me to feign enthused responses, lest he get down on himself.



Clockwise from top left: Norman Sr., Grandma, and Norman in 1978; poker with Dad at Topanga Beach, California; skiing in Austria; on Dad's back, 1968



With every gutless wave Noah rode, every Ping-Pong game and round of water volleyball and chocolate ice cream devoured while lounging in the common room, my patience wound tighter and tighter. We were with two other families and a few couples at the hotel, and Noah seemed to be spending more time hanging out with the girls on the trip than surfing. Watching him shoot the shit in the frothing jacuzzi while the sun set on the Gulf of California, I tried to put my frustration into perspective. It was so simple for my old man, I lamented. In his era, there was no pressure on him to reflect on what he did—he knew it was good for me, and that was enough. It's a different world today, of course, and his bullheaded approach wouldn't fly, but the fact remains—he showed me how to endure adversity and flourish in this world, and it ended up saving my life. After our plane crashed and my father was killed, I was left to fend for myself on the side of a steep peak in the San Gabriel Mountains, engulfed in a blizzard at 8,200 feet. By utilizing the skills and courage he'd cultivated in me through surfing and skiing, I was able to navigate the icy slopes, steep rock, and snowdrifts, and scramble my way down to a ranch house at

the base of the mountain. In the days and years that followed, it was the act of going surfing that kept me from spiraling too far into the pain and confusion inflicted by what I'd been through and what I'd lost. And, going forward, it was that wellspring of passion my father had nurtured in me that got me through the hardest storms.

Maybe that's why I was so tense about the surfing. I knew Noah would have to rely on himself one day—even if it would never involve the extreme circumstances under which I'd had to. I wanted him to taste the exhilaration of grasping, even partially, something that demanded his conviction and passion, as it would be a vital resource for the rest of

his life. But when the moment had come, I'd let it slip by.

I tossed and turned late into our third night. Noah was sprawled out on his bed across from mine, the sheet over his body faintly wafting in a cool air-conditioned breeze, and a recurring question haunted me: Will he ever know what it's like to unleash his imagination on a wave, to feel his body and mind break through what he believes are his limits and put it all together into his own masterpiece?

WHEN THE FIRST puddles of light touched the ocean, I was doing some yoga outside our room. It was hard to make out the surf with the sky the same metallic color as the water, but instead of yesterday's flaccid waves I discerned a cylindrical shape to them. Squinting at the sea, I saw another wave reach out from the one-dimensional monochrome and threaten to pitch, then melt away, before folding into a sharp hook. Definitely real.

I opened the door to our room. Noah slept with one arm hanging off the bed. Slipping right into my father's shoes, I envisioned waking Noah up and hauling him out of bed and into the surf. You can't let him miss another golden opportunity! The beautiful surf might only last an hour. It could be another year before he gets a chance like this. Next year he'll be 15, in full rebellion and most likely way out of reach. This is it! This is what you've been waiting for!

I GOT UP AROUND SEVEN AND NOAH'S BED WAS EMPTY. I MEANDERED TO THE COMMON ROOM AND POURED A CUP OF COFFEE. WHERE'S NOAH? I ASKED A FRIEND. SHE POINTED OUT THE WINDOW:

"He's been surfing since dawn."

But when my arm reached out to shake Noah, it just hovered in the air.

Lost in some corner of my mind, half formed, there seemed to be another way to help my son.

Maybe I'd figure it out in the ocean, I told myself.

Leaving the door ajar, I paddled out.

"WHY DIDN'T YOU wake me up?" Noah said when he finally made it into the lineup, the sea bulging with muscles of swell, the gray-green jungle amassed behind him.

"I wanted you to get your beauty sleep."

He smirked and rolled his eyes. "It looks insane out here!"

continued on page 114



SMITH

p. Mark Welsh

surfer: Dillon Perillo



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C

D

G

F

E

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A. Seastar Automatic Chronograph by **Tissot**; \$1,450; tissot.ch

B. 5100 Dive Series by **Szanto**; \$325; szantotime.com

C. Mackinaw Field 43mm by **Filson**; \$600; filson.com

D. Carroway by **Electric**; \$225; electriccalifornia.com

E. Runwell by **Shinola**; \$550; shinola.com

F. NSR 103 Tide Temp Compass by **Nautica**; \$200; nautica.com

G. P-38 Valjoux Automatic Chronograph by **Luminox**; \$3,000; luminox.com

STYLE 05.15

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ESSENTIALS 05.15

WANTED
Jersey Boys

THE RUGBY SHIRT IS MAKING A COMEBACK
by Will Deitrich-Egensteiner

WHEN I FIRST slipped on a rugby jersey before a match seven years ago, I was dismayed to learn that it was the only upper-body protection I'd be getting. But the burly slab of tightly woven cotton proved to be ample armor against minor dings. Which is why I wasn't the least bit surprised to find out that Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard once bought one on a trip to Scotland, guessing that it would withstand the abuse of scrambling up rock walls better than the usual oxford. He was right. Durable and loose fitting, heavyweight rugby shirts like the Sender are as ideal for scaling El Cap as they are for scrumming down on the pitch. Plus, the high twill collar keeps slings from cutting into your neck. After his Scotland trip, Chouinard started importing the shirts to the United States, where they became the de facto uniform of Yosemite climbers in the 1970s. Made of thick, abrasion-resistant organic cotton, with a relaxed cut that doesn't restrict movement, Patagonia's Sender is every bit as tough as the original. \$89; patagonia.com





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Everything But the Kitchen Sink

CAR CAMPING HAS COME A LONG WAY FROM THE DAYS OF INSTANT COFFEE AND CARD GAMES BY FLASHLIGHT

by Sam Moulton

1. Outdoor concerts. Beach-side picnics. Overnight trips with the kids. **Alite Designs' waterproof Meadow mat** (\$39; alitedesigns.com) is up for almost everything you do outside.

2. Coleman's Hyperflame FyreChampion stove (\$180; coleman.com) is just like the company's original Army green, propane two-burner, only better: it's sturdier, it cooks hotter, and it's better at blocking the wind. Plus, you get two griddles.

3. Kelty's Woobie 30 sleeping bag (\$65; kelty.com) is for your littlest campers. It fits mini dudes and dudettes up to four feet tall. And you can't beat the prints.

4. Simple and tough, Zippo's Rugged lantern (\$90; zippo.com) is water- and tumble-proof. The lithium-ion cell lasts an impressive ten hours on high, but there's no swapping out batteries if it flatlines.

5. Stanley's Mountain Vacuum Coffee System (\$50; stanley-pmi.com) is a barista in a bottle. A pot, a French press, two cups, and storage for grounds nest inside the 17-ounce thermos.

6. The soft-sided Yeti Hopper 30 cooler (\$300; yeticoolers.com) is overkill, and that's the point. Not only is it leakproof and indestructible, but it'll keep 18 beers cold for a whopping three days.

7. Mountainsmith's Modular Hauler 4 (\$100; mountainsmith.com) keeps everything organized. Each kid or activity gets a color-coded cube—the set comes with four—and the entire open-top tote system slots easily into the trunk. Packing for a week-end has never been easier.

8. Rain, a few drops, and a nasty New Mexico sandstorm didn't faze Outdoor Tech's ruggedized, rich-sounding Big Turtle Shell speaker (\$229; outdoortech.com). Yet what really sets it apart is its 16 hours of battery life. And it doubles as a power source, with enough juice to charge your smartphone up to four times.

9. Big Agnes's Gilpin Falls Powerhouse 4 MtnGlo tent (\$600; bigagnes.com) is spacious and easy to set up, and there are stash pockets galore. But it really shines at night—literally. One click of a button turns on strips of flexible LEDs embedded in the seams. It's totally unnecessary and totally awesome, and the extra flair adds negligible weight.

10. We've tested all sorts of cooksets and always come back to GSI's Pioneer Table (\$70; gsioutdoors.com). It cleans up easily, is dishwasher safe, and will last through seasons of abuse.

11. It's the Bentley of portable seating. Alite Designs' Bison camp chair (\$200; alitedesigns.com) is 34 inches tall and stylish enough to be a patio fixture. It also packs down to the size of a yoga mat.



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School of Rock

HOW TO ASSEMBLE YOUR
FIRST BOULDERING KIT

by Adam Roy

1. Krieg's Bouldering Bucket (\$33; kriegclimbing.com) is the size of a soup pot and holds enough chalk for even the sweatiest sessions. A handy zipper pocket lets you safely stow keys, and a small sleeve keeps your Lapis chalk brush within reach.

2. Down-turned soles are more precise on tiny edges, but they can be painful for beginners. **Scarpa's Vapor V climbing shoes** (\$159; scarpa.com) strike the perfect balance, with a moderately curved arch and asymmetrical design that concentrates power in the toe.

3. Made from a spandex-denim blend, **Prana's Axiom jeans** (\$85; prana.com) look like classic blues but are flexible enough for the kinds of moves that have you twisting like Gumby.

4. Founded by British climber John Ellison, **Climbers Against Cancer** donates the proceeds from this **cotton T-shirt** (\$23; climbersagainstcancer.org) to research efforts around the world.

5. Standard toothbrushes work fine for scrubbing excess chalk from holds, but they wear out quickly and don't reach the tiniest crimps. The soft-bristled **Lapis climbing brush** (\$8; lapisholds.com) lasts longer than nylon and won't erode rock.

6. Metolius's Session crash pad (\$149; metoliusclimbing.com) is the Goldilocks of bouldering protection. At four inches thick and three feet long folded, it's big enough to save you from a digger but small enough to toss in the trunk. The flap closure and stash pocket make it easy to carry extra gear.

7. Kind's savory-sweet **Strong and Kind bars** (\$2; kindsnacks.com) come packed with ten grams of muscle-repairing almond and seed protein. We like the Honey BBQ.

DAY 3, MILE 1

Slice off a fresh strip of moleskin. Slap it on yesterday's blisters. Break camp with the rising sun already hot on our backs.

MILE 7

Something thrashes about in the brush up ahead. I palm my SOG in case it's not just a deer.

CAMP

Shred deadwood for kindling. Embellish the day's adventures around the fire with my crew.

MILE 3

Cut length of paracord with handle groove. Mend Joe's tattered pack strap. It served him well.

MILE 9

A riverside clearing. Perfect place to camp. Cut loose a trout too big for Pete's pack rod. Dehydrated dinner. Again.



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Walk This Way

HIKING SHOES GET A LONG-OVERDUE DOSE OF STYLE

by Jakob Schiller

BEST FOR: DAY HIKES

1. Ridgmont Mesa Oiled Suede \$99

At first glance, the Mesa Oiled may look like your typical stylish chukka, but there's more to this midtop than meets the eye. The beefy lug pattern grips choss as capably as any trail shoe, and it's armored with thick waterproof suede uppers and vulcanized outsoles. We wouldn't recommend it for long or technical excursions—you'll likely want more support if you're hauling a pack—but we tested it on several desert outings and found it perfectly suited to light hiking. ridgmontoutfitters.com

BEST FOR: TECHNICAL TERRAIN

2. Salomon and Topo Designs Instinct Pro LTR \$140

Performance-minded Salomon teamed up with the perennially cool backpack and accessories maker Topo Designs to create the limited-edition Instinct Pro LTR. It's a stable, comfortable, lightweight shoe

that holds up well when off-roading, thanks to top-quality full-grain leather and Cordura uppers. The exterior isn't as breathable as what you'll find on the synthetic version, but the rubber outsoles are just as grippy on slick ground. Plus, there's no ignoring the flashy Crayola colors. salomon.com

BEST FOR: LONGER TREKS

3. Forsake Clyde \$120

The Clyde is proof that not all hiking boots need to make you look like an overgrown Boy Scout. The most supportive shoe here, the Clyde has everything we look for in a serious hiker—tons of internal padding, a waterproof membrane, and bomber construction, including an injection-molded nylon shank and die-cut foam midsole—in a fresh-looking package. But you don't need to be in the backcountry to appreciate these high-tops: they're also great for just kicking around. forsake.com

BEST FOR: EVERYDAY WEAR

4. Lowa Bandon GTX \$185

The Bandon's sleek, full-grain leather outer and clean, classy look mask the superior functionality of this sneaker-like low-top. Yes, it's great for pavement and urban adventures (it's quickly become our go-to travel shoe), but when the roads turned to dirt and the rain started falling, the Bandon's Gore-Tex liner kept our feet dry, even in big puddles, and the hardy lugs stood up to even the loosest scree. lowaboos.com

BEST FOR: COLDER DAYS

5. Woolrich Eagle \$170

This may be the least technical shoe of the bunch, but that doesn't mean the Eagle can't handle casual adventures, with its rugged sole, stiff toe box, and stout foam midsole. It isn't the shoe we'd pick for warmer weather—all that wool gets a bit toasty—but we love it for the shoulder seasons. woolrich.com



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THE WILDEST WAY INTO YELLOWSTONE

"Beautiful shape," I said, poker-faced.

"I'm going after the vertical snap today!" he said, spinning round and paddling into a little nugget.

The waves were so consistent that I did not see him for over an hour.

I'd just finished an incredible ride, slipping over the back of the wave, when Noah popped up, having duck-dived under the same wave.

"I suck," he whined.

Face squeezed, he was crying, and it was in such sharp contrast to everything I was feeling and would have expected to see in my son that I chuckled.

"What's wrong?" I said.

"I work on it and work on it, but I never get better. All my friends are better. I'm not good at anything."

I wanted to scream. Scare away those demons. Squash them with my bare hands. I wanted to save him. How many times had I done that? Rescued him, salvaged the surf session or the ski run from a tantrum, prevented him from embarrassing himself at a birthday party? "Grab my leg and I'll tow you back out," I wanted to say, but I remained silent instead.

I stuttered there in dissolution, and in that void percolated an idea long hidden in the corner of my mind: my father never had to contend with me as a teenager, and seen from the other side of that equation, I never had to contend with him. That's why I couldn't get a feel for what Noah and I were going through, and that's what held me back from taking action. The road we were on had stretched beyond the map my father left for me.

"Why do I keep blowing perfect fucking waves?" Noah cried out.

"Hey," I said in a booming voice, snapping him from the downward spiral. "Who cares how you surf? That's not the point anyway."

"Then what's the point?"

"This. Right now. The pursuit. That you have passion."

"Fuck passion."

"Ah, now take that and paddle for every damn wave and ride it like your life depended on it."

"But it does."

"Yep," I said and paddled away.

For the rest of the morning, each time I crossed Noah's path he was either momentarily elated from a turn or drop-in, was lingering by himself in despair, was beating a fist on the deck of his board, or was digging hard to catch yet another immaculate blade of water. I was surprised that he never asked me to comment on any of his maneuvers.

At one point, I went in to rehydrate and eat a banana. Walking back up the beach, I

saw Noah turn off the bottom of a wave, go straight up, crack the lip, and snap the tail around but not his shoulders, causing his board to stick at the top of the wave. Then he air-dropped to the trough and blew apart. When he surfaced, he grabbed his board and flung it into the air, opening his mouth and howling, but the churning sea swallowed his cry. As his surf session progressed, every time Noah unraveled in anger or frustration, releasing a little tempest, it was absorbed in the fluidity and vastness of the ocean. Each new wave was a chance for him to start again—an idyllic space to work through his fury and hone his character—and was clearly beyond anything I could offer.

THE SURF TAPERED off around noon. Noah's knees were shredded—chafed by his tail pad and cratered by the salt water—and it was hard for him to walk, much less surf. I knew he was in real pain because it even prevented him from playing volleyball in the pool. Every limp and grimace seemed to reiterate that he would probably not surf again before the trip was over. I wondered: Would he use his knees as an excuse for not getting back out there?

That evening our whole group was in high spirits, buying each other beers and toasting the waves. Yet Noah didn't talk about his waves; he kicked back in one of the pigskin chairs, sort of lost in a daze, drifting on some private current. After dinner he ducked away with the girls he was hanging out with, and I crashed out before he got back.

STIFF AND SORE, I decided to sleep in. Near dawn a door creaked, and I heard some scuffling and figured Noah was going to the bathroom. When I got up around seven his bed was empty. I meandered to the common room and poured a cup of coffee, expecting to find him over a plate of huevos rancheros. The only person in the room was the aunt of one of the girls Noah had become friends with, and I asked her if he was in their room "horsing around." She pointed out the window: "He's been surfing since dawn."

A small figure dropped in at the top of the point near the big rocks, and when the figure got to the bottom of the wave, the lip was standing well over him, his neon blond hair popping out against the blue wall. I rushed to our room and grabbed the camera.

Noah was back at the top of the point, and he took off on another overhead wave. Setting a high line to reach a quickly peeling section, he drafted off his speed at the bottom of the wave, let the lip build up, and then shot up the face and cranked the board around—cutting a deep groove in the face of the wave—repeating the maneuver several times all the way to the shore. When he

trotted by me toward the point, I motioned to the camera. Without a word he walked over and stood beside me. I shaded the display window from the sun and scrolled through sequences of his turns.

"I'm not going as vertical as I thought," he said.

"We never do," I said. "We see the lip pitching above us, and our brains project us slightly forward of it, just ahead of the critical hook."

"I have to fight through that."

"Yeah, that's what it comes down to."

He nodded, and I noticed that his knees were wrapped in duct tape.

"Where'd you get the duct tape?"

"From one of the guys."

"Good thinking."

He did not respond. His gaze was following a wave, and I could see his eyes dropping to the trough and making an imaginary line right up under the throwing lip. His nostrils flared, and I got a sense of what had changed in him yesterday. That surf session had stripped him down to his core, and by the end of it there was nothing left to hide behind, his passion unchained.

Noah turned and jogged up the point, and I sat back on the rock.

After a few attempts, he started getting his board to go straight up the face, fighting off the instinct to project out, and he pulled off a series of legitimate vertical snaps. But what was more impressive was that he was taking off deep and choosing the right lines on the right waves, which allowed him to explore a wide assortment of maneuvers and really push what he thought were his limits. I knew from experience that the bedrock of faith he'd found today would never desert him.

"That was a masterful session," I said when he came in for a break.

He nodded, a budding smile just beneath his mouth.

"Thanks, Dad. Thanks for taking me here and putting up with everything."

"You're welcome."

The smile broke all the way free and he said, "I'm going back out."

I watched him trot along the path, disappearing down the beach stairs, and I flashed on Grandpa showing me the lean-to for the burro. Of course he knew it belonged to someone else, and that there was a good chance the owner would find me, but instead of intervening he'd let me have my own experience.

Noah reappeared on the sand. He ambled to the shoreline and followed the curve of the cove all the way to the point. O

NORMAN OLLESTAD IS THE AUTHOR OF THE BESTSELLING MEMOIR CRAZY FOR THE STORM. HIS NEW BOOK, GRAVITY, IS AVAILABLE THROUGH AMAZON.



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REPREVE

PARAGLIDING continued from page 72

break—two days of sun, which reaps them another 100 miles—before persistent rain settles in. “We were flying in the most turbulent, whacked-out conditions ever,” Gadd recalls. “I run paragliding competitions, and we cancel them when conditions are too strong. If we were flying in a competition, I would have canceled most of our flying days.”

IT'S NEARLY TWO weeks later, on September 4, before they're airborne again. Rested and resupplied, they launch late in the afternoon and barely cover 15 miles in two hours. They land in a snow-dusted meadow just below the summit of Mount Broadwood (7,299 feet) to pitch camp. And then McClurg realizes that he left his tent behind. “By about 9:30 P.M., I was encased in a pretty nice ream of ice,” he says later.

In the morning, clear skies prevail. But the late-summer sun is weak and can't fuel reliable thermals. Plus, Gadd is sick—a nasty head cold. They launch anyway, with the U.S. border a mere 20 miles ahead, but they have trouble gaining altitude. After 90 minutes, they wrestle their wings up 300 feet, just enough height to get themselves across a wide glacial valley. “We would have been on the ground if we didn't get to the next thermal,” McClurg says. “I felt like it was do or die.”

It's a few minutes past 5 P.M. when Gadd and McClurg discern a succession of peaks, aligned north to south, known as Inverted Ridge. It appears to be a straight shot to the border. At 6:45, with less than an hour of daylight remaining, Gadd notices a 50-foot-wide clear-cut running east to west. He checks his GPS. “Holy shit! We're over the border,” he shouts to McClurg over the radio. Both pilots are screaming and hollering and doing air high-fives.

By sheer chance, their final flight ended near a logging road that led them out of the wilderness. All told, their north-south linear distance totaled 497 miles. Add in detours and backtracks, and they easily covered twice that. During the monthlong expedition they completed 15 flights, which averaged about 32 miles each. “But numbers don't tell the story,” insists Gadd. “Paragliding is a sport that is least defined by its numbers. It's freedom that defines it. It's the freest sport I do in my life—and the expression of that is what Gavin and I did.” He goes on: “The route we flew had never been flown in a paraglider—and may never be flown again. The blank areas on the map used to scare me. Now I'm like, ‘Let's go there!’” **O**

MICHAEL BEHAR (@MICHAELBEHAR)
WROTE ABOUT SNOW-PREDICTION EXPERT JOEL GRATZ IN JULY 2013.

BUHRING continued from page 93

and the Arizona Trail Race are completely unsupported. Riders can use any publicly available services—restaurants, gas stations, bike shops—but no dedicated assistance. It's a throwback to the old days of the grand tours, the prewar era of the Tour de France when riders would slam out as many miles as they could before falling asleep.

The race began on June 6. On day two, Buhring wrecked over the handlebars. “She sends us this text,” says Mike Dion, the Denver-based director who shot the documentary *Inspired to Ride*. “All it says is, ‘Bad crash.’” Buhring, it turned out, had cracked a rib, and her leg was banged up. “She says, ‘I've had ribs cracked before; it's only going to get worse,’” recalls Dion. “And then she just took off.”

A few days later, in Montana, Buhring's seatpost began to slip. She'd stripped out the screw that held up the saddle, and because it was a customized European part, she couldn't replace it on the road. “She'd crank it up, and an hour later it would have settled down again,” says Dion. “She looked like an adult on a kid's bike, with her knees up. What it was doing to her knees was insane. There's something about her, mentally and physically—she can just get on and go nonstop.”

Riders who undertake these prolonged trials often talk about experiencing a separate reality, a kind of religious state that takes place late at night within the glowing bubble of their headlamps. With the miles ticking by on empty roads, their legs become disembodied motors spinning 18 miles per hour while the brain enters a meditative state. For Buhring, this constant motion suspends the listlessness that she might otherwise feel in ordinary life.

“I get bored if I'm anywhere too long,” she says. “I need to feel like I'm accomplishing something. I always have this feeling of urgency, like time is not on my side or is running out. And I always feel like I need to catch up.”

Having trained on the fresh mozzarella balls and Illy espressos of southern Italy, Buhring wasn't prepared to cross the great food desert that is the American Midwest. “You're on the road, alone, eating the worst stuff,” she says. “I'd go into a gas station and just start grabbing stuff.” Anything with peanuts or peanut butter was preferable; she was grateful for the current coconut-water fad.

“At a certain point, the road seemed immaterial,” she says. “Shadows were chasing me, trees were turning into wild animals, people were jumping out at me, and when I looked again there was nothing there. Nothing looked like what it was.” Near the finish of the race, in Virginia, Buhring awoke to the bright lights and honking horn of an

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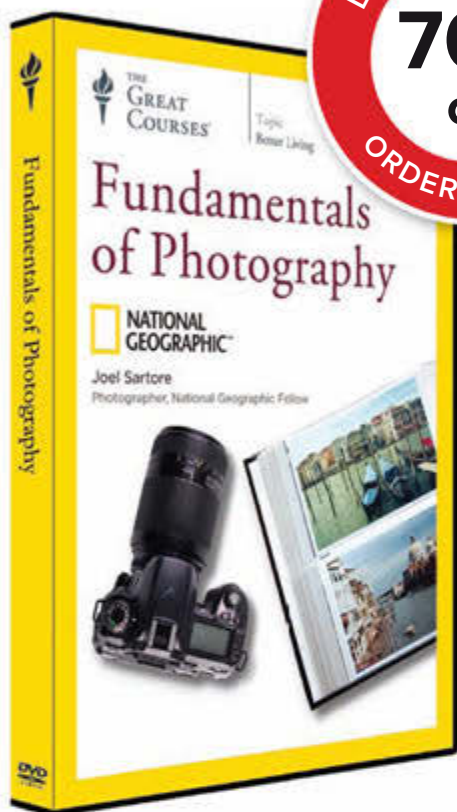
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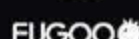
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BUHRING

oncoming truck. (Cyclists falling asleep on their bikes is one of the biggest dangers of this type of riding.)

Given Buhring's sudden success, ultradistance cyclists in online forums have noted that her times and average pace mean she probably isn't as fast as the top female RAAM riders, who average 50 more miles per day. Buhring counters this by pointing out that her bike is loaded with everything she needs to survive on the road and sleep in a ditch. "At RAAM, you have a team there to hand you the perfect drink or food at the right time," she says. "Where's the adventure in that? It's less of a physical challenge."

In the end, 25 of 43 riders finished. Hall won in 17 days, 16 hours, and 17 minutes. Buhring was only three days behind, tied for fourth with a time of 20 days, 23 hours, and 46 min-

utes. She came in 16 days ahead of the next female competitor, German rider Franziska Hollender. "I mean, I'm not surprised that she won the women's race," says Hall, "but it was a surprise how close she was to the front of the overall race as well."

To do it, Buhring rode the last 36 hours without sleep, covering 500 miles in one push.

OUT ON THE flats south of Salerno, Buhring pedaled open a slipstream that I did my best to stay in. She isn't blazingly fast, but she's powerful. Like that other German, Jan Ullrich, she prefers to climb mountains using the big chainring rather than increase her cadence. She won't train with other women, and rarely with men. "They can't keep up," she says. When she's on group rides, the pace often quickens because she's there. "There's this expectation now that I'm unbeatable," she says. "It's a lot of pressure."

This part of Italy is an American cyclist's dream. The roads are paved and spider in all directions, over mountains, along flat coastlines, and through provincial nature parks full of Roman ruins. We warmed up with 75 miles on the first day and then rode 125 on each of the next two. It was a pleasant reminder of just how much asphalt you can cover on a bike if you don't have anywhere to be.

Buhring twisted a knee in a crash in De-

cember, but she was training again by February. She wants to break her own 12-day record in the Transcontinental, which should have 250 riders this July. Then she hopes to set a record for bisecting the widest part of Italy, between France and Slovenia, in less than 24 hours. And in September, she'll likely be the only woman riding solo and unsupported in the Race Across the Dolomites, nearly 400 nonstop miles over 16 mountain passes, with 52,000 feet of climbing. Maybe then she'll try to set the record for riding from Fairbanks, Alaska, to Tierra del Fuego, Chile. She hasn't really decided yet.

One thing seems certain: Buhring isn't capable of sitting still for very long. The thought seems to terrify her, as if she's trying to evade some dogged unhappiness that can only gain ground when she's completely at rest. Or maybe she's simply making up for lost time.

"I wonder how many people have hidden potential they were possibly born with and never discover," she says. "I'm just getting started."

You get the sense she could go forever. **O**

SENIOR EDITOR GRAYSON SCHAFFER'S PROFILE OF HENDRIK COETZEE IS ONLINE AT OUTSIDEONLINE.COM/CONSUMED.

Volume XL, Number 5. *OUTSIDE* (ISSN 0278-1433) is published monthly by Mariah Media Network LLC, 400 Market St., Santa Fe, NM 87501. Periodical postage paid at Santa Fe, NM, and additional mailing offices. Canadian Goods and Services Tax Registration No. R126291723. Canada Post International Publications Mail Sales Agreement No. 40015979. Subscription rates: U.S. and possessions, \$24; Canada, \$35 (includes GST); foreign, \$45. Washington residents add sales tax. POSTMASTER: Send U.S. and international address changes to *OUTSIDE*, P.O. Box 6228, Harlan, IA 51593-1728. Send Canadian address changes to *OUTSIDE*, P.O. Box 877 Stn Main, Markham, ON L3P-9Z9.



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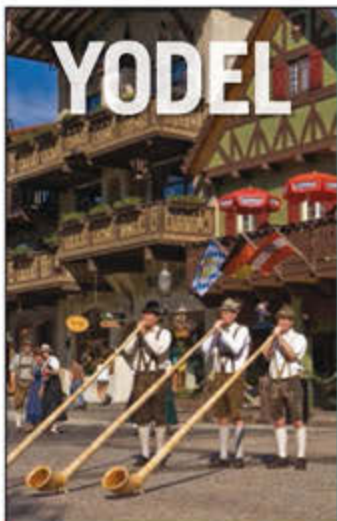
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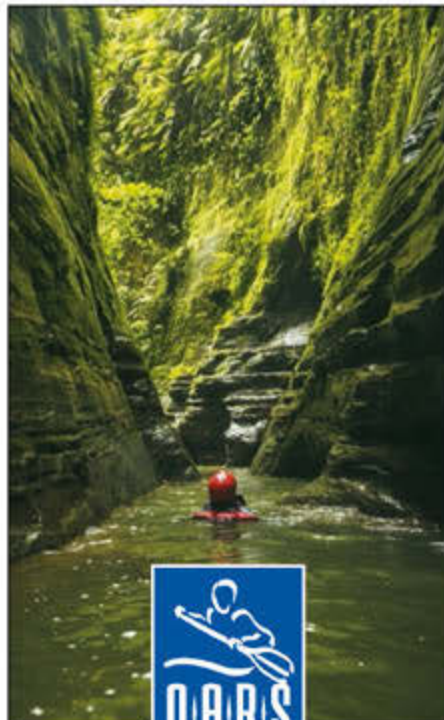


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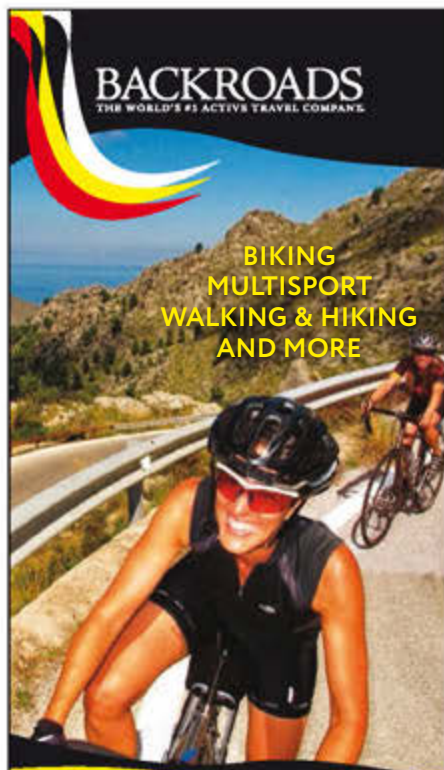
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